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NEW STATESMAN

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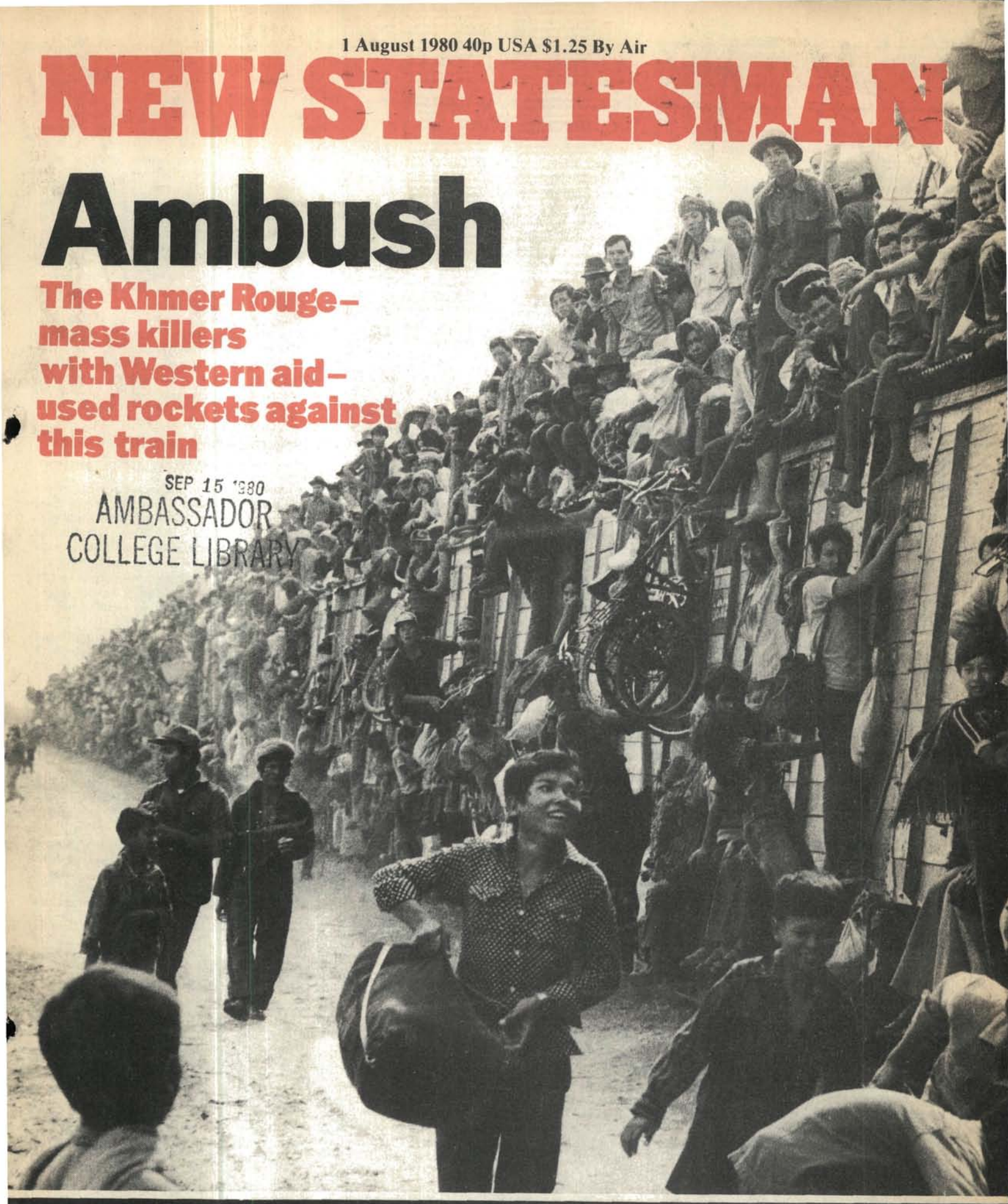

JOHN PILGER REPORTS ON AMERICA'S NEW INDOCHINA WAR

More news from Grub Street, 1980
Billygate: the Arab version

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NEW STATESMAN

Vol100 1 August 1980 No 2576

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NOTES

New move to criminalise industrial pickets

Harriet Harman writes: It may soon become a criminal offence to be the seventh, eighth or subsequent person on an industrial picket line. This would be the effect of carrying out the proposals in the government's Green Paper on public order, and backing up the Employment Bill with a Code of Practice along the lines suggested by Jim Prior.

There has never been any legal *right* to picket, but people who have stood outside factory gates 'in furtherance of a trade dispute' are not usually prosecuted for it. They can be arrested for 'obstructing a police officer', but not simply for picketing. And until the Employment Bill becomes law, they are also generally immune from civil action — for example, from an employer suing for damages.

The Employment Bill restricts immunity from civil proceedings to pickets at or near their own place of work, or to a trade union official accompanying them. Two weeks ago, Jim Prior announced that he was considering issuing a Code of Practice with the new law, which would further define a 'peaceful picket' as involving no more than six individuals. Earlier, when he was introducing the picketing sections of the Bill to parliament, Mr Prior declared: 'This has absolutely nothing to do with the police. It has nothing to do with criminal law.' But viewed alongside the new Green Paper on public order, his assurance looks unconvincing.

The Green Paper considers the possibility of extending to demonstrations and open-air meetings the powers which the police currently have to control processions and marches. These include a requirement (in some areas) to give prior notice to the police; power to impose conditions; and power to ban if there is thought to be a threat to public order. The restrictions, says the Green Paper, 'might not apply, for example, to peaceful picketing, though they could apply to a large scale demonstration in support of pickets'.

If a picket line ceases to be 'peaceful' when it has more than six people on it, then it could presumably qualify as a 'demonstration', subject to the new police powers. Thus, if prior notice has not been given, or if police conditions are not met (likely events in the heat of an industrial dispute), then the pickets will find themselves in breach of the criminal law and liable to arrest — not for 'obstructing the highway' or any other such offence, but merely for *picketing*.

William Whitelaw seems to have heeded Sir David McNee, who told the Parliamentary Home Affairs Committee in February that he wanted powers to disperse 'assemblies'. 'My use of the term "assemblies"', the Police Commissioner explained, 'brings industrial picketing within its ambit.'

Who is to blame for our telephone bills?

Christopher Hird writes: The main responsibility for the 20 per cent increase in phone charges to be introduced this autumn lies with the government. In March, commenting on the budget, the *New Statesman* said that one of the effects of the government's policy would be high prices in nationalised industries as a result of cuts in government aid to these concerns. The Post Office is obliged to finance virtually all its capital spending out of current profits. Under the Budget plans it had to find all but £65 million of its capital requirements of £1,680 million. This is a much more demanding target than that achieved by most of the private sector: last year private industry provided only 60 per cent of its total capital requirements — investment in fixed assets and increased working capital — of £28 billion.

As this year progressed the Post Office realised that if British Telecommunications — the telecommunications side which is being split from the Post Office — was to maintain its planned level of capital investment, it would need more money than it could generate from its existing business. By private sector standards it would have been reasonable to borrow the extra sum but the government have refused to allow this, insisting instead that the consumer finances the investment through higher prices. The reason is largely the government's concern to keep down the Public Sector Borrowing Requirement which, under the Tories' particular form of monetarism, is believed to be a prime cause of inflation. This means, in effect, that the government believes that borrowing by profitable state industries to finance investment is inflationary, but borrowing by private industry — even if money comes in the end from the same financial institutions — is not.

Although it is almost certainly true that Britel (like any large concern) could be a more efficient service, both for its customers and in financial terms, it is hard to blame its need for investment funds on low productivity. Output per employee has risen consistently over the last decade and by over 10 per cent in the last two years.

Mackerel falls prey to 'commodity imperialism'

Iain Fraser Grigor writes: Prospects are bleak for the British mackerel fishery, which re-opens in three weeks' time. In recent years it has been vastly profitable, not least for the big Soviet-bloc fleet of Klondykers which buys most of the catch and exports it, either for domestic use or as aid in West Africa. The British catching fleet has grown enormously as a result and is now dependent for its survival on the Soviet-bloc market — which is very much a buyers' one.

Last year mackerel was sold officially at around £80 a tonne, but many British and Irish boats were selling over-quota catches to the Klondykers for £40 cash. This inevitably caused a glut and near panic is reported in some quarters. One mackerel catcher, financed largely with UK taxpayers' money, is insured for £800,000, but the owners would be lucky to get £120,000 for her — if they could find a British buyer. The mackerel fleet is now ablaze with rumours that the probable price for 'official' mackerel this year will be down to £60 — if there is a market at all. Last week, it was reported that a fleet of freezer-ships was lying off Lagos, still unable to discharge last year's mackerel cargo.

The tragedy, for small West Coast Scottish and Cornish fishermen in particular, is that the mackerel boom has brought them no benefit; nor has it brought anything to the local economies (NS 25 January). In all, the fishery begins to resemble a good case of 'commodity imperialism'.

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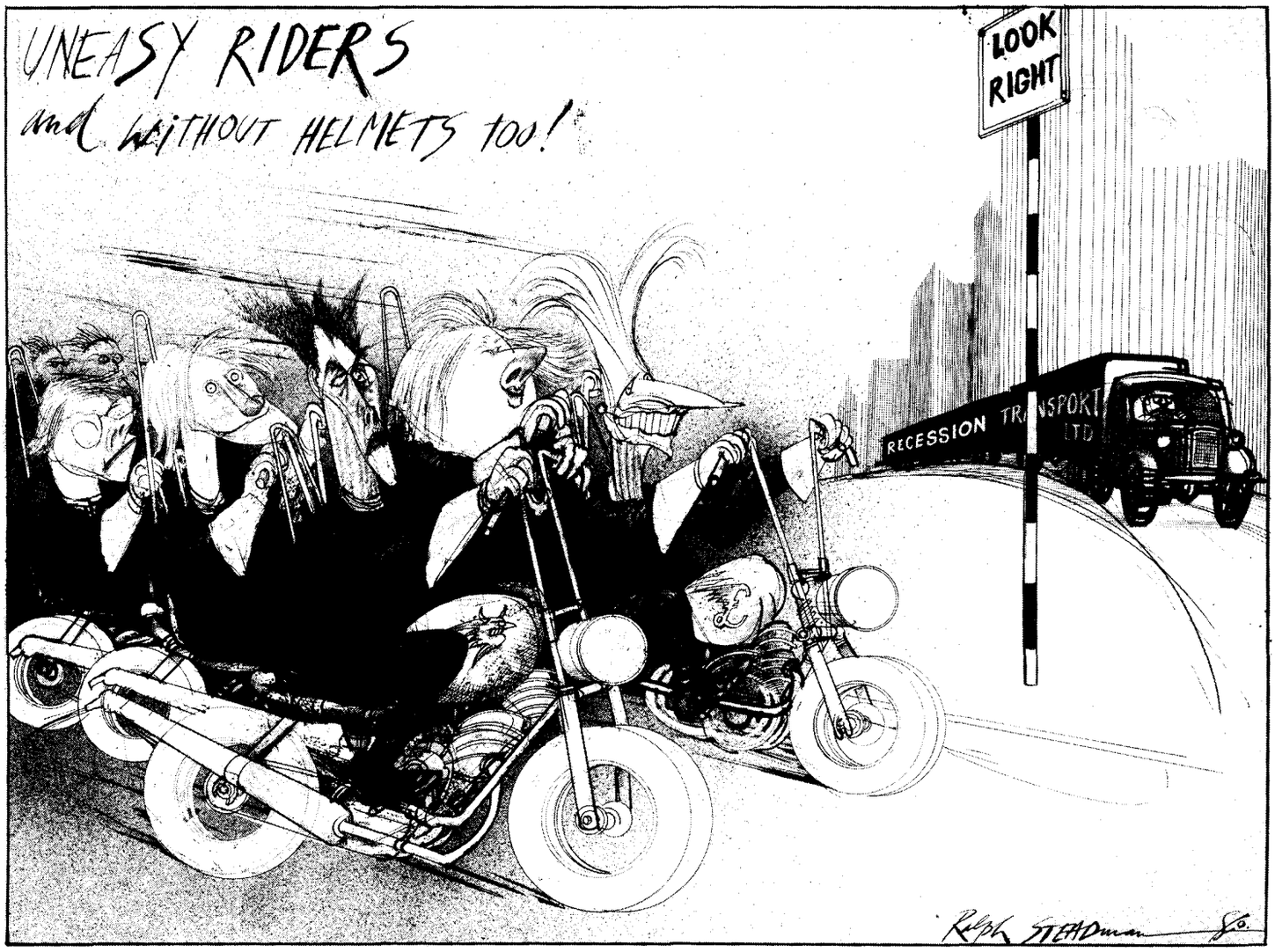

A spike of his own

Peter Godfrey writes: The London Borough of Southwark recently agreed to rehouse Arthur Manley, a 57-year-old homeless man recovering from illness and alcoholism, in order to fulfil its statutory duty under the Housing (Homeless Persons) Act of 1977. It did so by offering Mr Manley a home at the 'spike' — Camberwell's notorious reception centre. In fact, Mr Manley was already living there. It was his strong desire to get out of the place which had led him to apply to Southwark Council for a home: at the 'spike', he was among alcoholics, he could not digest the institutional food because of a stomach ulcer, and the stairs which he had to climb caused him considerable pain because he was suffering from emphysema, a disease of the lung.

The 1977 Act obliges local authorities to secure accommodation for homeless people who are in priority need. Southwark Council acknowledges that Manley comes into this category. The Act's Code of Guidance states that 'Permanent accommodation should be secured as soon as possible. Homeless people should not be obliged to spend a certain period in interim accommodation as a matter of policy.'

Reports from social workers confirmed that Manley was remarkably well-motivated to re-establish a normal life for himself; and a local voluntary organisation had promised to provide him with the necessary social and medical support while he set himself up in a home of his own. In spite of all that, the Council would offer him no alternative to the 'spike', except a place in a Salvation Army hostel, where life would be much the same.

A housing department spokesman insisted Manley was 'not capable of supporting himself in permanent accommodation'. Why then, would the council not provide him with some sort of sheltered accommodation (an alternative provided by the 1977 Act)? Its reasons were 'confidential'. Besides, the council was fulfilling its statutory obligations because Manley would, at some stage, be transferred to a resettlement centre, where he would be eligible for rehousing by the Joint Assessment and Resettlement Team (JART), a body set up by the Greater London Council and the London Boroughs Association with a small pool of accommodation for homeless people. Unfortunately, JART only houses people who do not need substantial support. As team leader Pat Leigh explains: 'If we decide that he is not suitable to live independently, then we won't be able to house him.'

If Southwark can get away with this, any local authority is similarly free to shelve its responsibilities under the Act. Voluntary groups in Southwark believe that the council is reticent because housing one priority case could set a precedent for housing all of them (as the Act envisaged). The spokesman for Southwark housing department said that he could not remember when the council had last provided a permanent home to someone from Camberwell Reception Centre.

Compensation for Burke

Rob Rohrer writes: The Home Office has offered £6,950 compensation to Tony Burke, the Liverpool man wrongly imprisoned for life two years ago for a murder he did not commit (NS Oct 5 1979). Until his release last October Burke spent 18 months in custody — almost 12 months of it in Wakefield Prison. The amount of the award — £89.10 per week — was assessed by Michael Ogden QC, chairman of the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board. A Home Office spokesman was unable to tell the *New Statesman* this week whether the award was taxable.

In 1979 Burke, then a part-time club bouncer, was charged with murder after trying to defend a Liverpool homosexual from being savagely beaten. Witnesses, some of whom were not called at his trial, said he had been trying to stop the fight.

Compensation awards by the Home Office are rare. There is no statutory right to compensation following a wrongful conviction. In Burke's case the *ex gratia* payment was based on a finely detailed assessment, which even took into account his wife's Social Security payments. He hasn't yet decided whether to accept, but the Home Office spokesman told the *New Statesman:* 'It is entirely open to them to come back to us and say they don't find it acceptable . . . and either press for more or make further representations.'

In the last three years only 17 people have been paid compensation — certainly no reflection of the chronic inefficiency, to put it kindly, of English justice.

Traffic prediction — a computer disaster

Mick Hamer writes: There is a strong case for an investigation by the Public Accounts Committee into the affair of the Department of Transport computer model which has wasted, it was revealed last week, at least £8 million of public money. It now seems that the loss could be much greater, that the scheme was introduced despite the opposition of some senior civil servants and that the department have been dilatory, to say the least, about releasing details.

At the centre of the scandal is the Regional Highway Traffic Model (RHTM) which was designed to forecast traffic on any hypothetical road network for any future year and thus help plan the road building programme. When the model was tested, by comparing its predictive powers on over 400 sites with the actual traffic flows from the 1976 census, it failed miserably. Only 267 predictions came within the range of a 50 per cent under-estimate and a 100 per cent over-estimate. No amount of tinkering could improve its accuracy and the model was written off.

The major problem of the RHTM — which was intended to replace local computer models — was its

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ambitious target of trying to forecast traffic on every major road in England. This involved the collection of a massive amount of data. Despite these surveys the samples were still not large enough to be statistically significant. The Standing Advisory Committee on Trunk Road Assessment (SACTRA) in its report on the affair recommended that, in future, 'suitably qualified professional statisticians are always directly involved when traffic surveys are being designed.'

The main champion of the RHTM was Ron Bridle, the Chief Highway Engineer and a dominant personality in the Department of Transport. He wanted a centralised computer model which objectors at public inquiries would find much harder to question than local models. Not all of his colleagues thought the idea practical. He was the only member of a four-person steering group set up to take policy decisions on the model who favoured the concept. This group — of which Bridle was chairman — did not meet until one year after work on the RHTM had started and only met on two further occasions over the next five months. It met for the last time in May 1977.

At the beginning of 1978 the precurser of SACTRA questioned whether the RHTM was necessary, commenting 'the RHTM is mainly relevant to strategic route improvements. The RHTM would thus have been of great value ten years ago when the bulk of the programme was of this character.' On more than one occasion, Permanent Secretary Sir Peter Baldwin who is principal accounting officer for the Department has been asked by senior civil servants to intervene but decided not to.

The real cost of the project has been far greater than the £8 million estimated by the department. This only covers the cost of computing time and consultant's fees and excludes the cost of the time spent by the department and county councils in data collection and analysis. The total bill is believed to be over £15 million. The project was not financed from the Department of Transport's research vote but from the Chief Highway Engineer's research fund, which is part of the much larger Road Fund and thus more likely to escape parliamentary scrutiny.

It has taken an inordinately long time for the report to see the light of day, having been completed in December 1979. In the intervening months there has been considerable discussion in the department about what to do, with a task force set up to pick up the pieces. In the event the report's release coincided with the potentially more interesting — to motoring correspondents at least — announcement on car registration numbers. Contrary to normal practice there was no press release about the SACTRA report, though the press office had been well briefed to answer difficult questions. Just before publication Bridle's underling, who was technically in charge of the RHTM, was moved sideways to the less sensitive post of head of Engineering Intelligence.

Report reveals wage levels of UK firms in South Africa

Patrick Wintour writes: John Nott, Trade Minister last month refused to name those British companies which pay their South African workers less than the poverty datum. He refused also to name those which defy the EEC Code of Conduct requirements on provision of information about South African wage levels. But this week's report from the South African Labour Education Project has done most of Mr Nott's work for him.

It shows that while GKN-Sankey workers in Britain were getting £54.04 a week in 1979, the same company's South African workers were getting £20.77. In British Leyland's UK operation the minimum was £73.50, but only £24 in South Africa. And ICI's South African workers were getting £54.00 a week less than their British equivalents. (Food prices are not significantly different.)

Lonrho, for all its cultivation of Black African politics elsewhere on the continent, does little better in its 22 South African subsidiaries: some of which pay no more than 20-30 rand per week.

The Education Project's report questions the use of the Poverty Datum Line as an appropriate comparison. The calculations behind it are done by researchers who are sponsored by the employers' organisations. The report suggests that organised labour in Britain ought to support themselves: in the strikes in the Eastern Cape motor industry in June, Black workers were calling for a £75 weekly minimum, which would double the highest minimum-wage level now set by British-owned companies.

Disasters of Convenience

Martin Bailey writes: A supertanker disaster worse than that which killed fifty people in Bantry Bay last year was narrowly avoided last week. The *Energy Concentration* 'broke its back' whilst discharging at Rotterdam but miraculously none of its tanks were fractured and so there was no explosion. Supertanker disasters are occuring almost every month: there were five losses in the first half of 1980 compared with only four in the ten years to 1978. Much of the blame for this alarming increase can be attributed to falling safety standards, themselves partly the result of the rapid growth in the number of ships flying Flags of Convenience. Eight of the last ten supertankers lost sailed under the Liberian flag.

Liberia is now the major Flag of Convenience country with a 'fleet' of 2470 ships, compared with only two in 1948. A fifth of the world's shipping fleet is registered in the country, which collects some $11 million a year in registration fees. Panama collects a similar amount. In return shipowners are bound by much less onerous safety regulations than in countries such as Norway or Britain and can employ any nationality crew they like, usually cheap Asian labour. This is a major attraction for shipowners as most other countries' national laws require that locally registered ships should be crewed by their own citizens. A Swedish Shipowners' Association survey estimated that the daily running costs (mainly crew) of operating a Swedish-registered supertanker were $8000 compared with $5400 for a Liberian vessel. With world overcapacity in the tanker market and narrow profit margins, for the shipowner, such savings are worth making.

However such cost cutting makes ships unsafe. A recent Salvage Association study concluded that owners were often prepared to employ crews that were 'barely adequately trained'. There is no international standard on who can captain a ship and a lack of equipment can reduce safety. The *Energy Concentration,* for example, was not equipped with a mini-computer to calculate the order in which the various tanks sections should be unloaded. The simple hand-held calculator was not likely to be much use to the Hong Kong captain and Taiwanese chief officer, as the instructions were in Norwegian.

The *Betelgeuse,* which went down in Bantry Bay, was owned by the French oil company Total and was also Liberian registered. The report of the tribunal which investigated the incident found that Total had deliberately decided not to renew parts of the ballast tanks which were very badly corroded. The ship did not have an inert gas system and had not been equipped with a loadicator to calculate the stress on the ship's structure during unloading. This simple device — costing a few thousand pounds — is normally fitted to large tankers and would probably have prevented the disaster.

Recently the United Nations has set up an UNCTAD working group to deal specifically with Flags of Convenience. The developing countries — other than Liberia and Panama — point out that they generate 90 per cent of oil tanker cargoes and over a third of dry bulk cargoes but own less than 6 per cent of the world fleet. Abolishing Flags of Convenience would force many of the shipowners (mainly Greek, American, Hong Kong, Japanese and West German interests) out of business as they could not afford to run the ships. This would give the developing countries a chance to develop their own fleets.

But the working group has been unable to reach a decision and the issue will be thrashed out at a meeting in Geneva in September, with the developed countries — and Liberia and Panama — pressing hard for the retention of Flags of Convenience, with a tightening up of abuses.

Hong Kong charges start

Duncan Campbell writes: Hong Kong's Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) has brought 17 charges of deception, theft and bribery against the former Ministry of Defence official Eric Garland, who was one of the subjects of a *New Statesman/Daily Mirror* investigation in May.

Garland was MoD Land Agent in the colony, responsible for oversight of accommodation and other facilities for employees of the Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ) intelligence agency, which runs the Little Sai Wan listening-base. NS reports (16 and 23 May) included articles by a former GCHQ official, Jock Kane, describing how Garland and a senior GCHQ official named Frank Wilks combined to run a hotel business for civil servants while garland was still with the MoD.

Such malpractice was first reported to GCHQ ten years ago, but the organisation has consistently covered-up — most recently, by inspiring the government claim that all our revelations were 'old', and had been diligently 'investigated'. ICAC's view appears to have been different: ICAC officials have written thanking us for information which led directly to the charges against Garland.

The charges relate to recent dealings: ICAC, because of a local indemnity, cannot investigate events earlier than 1977. The NS therefore sent papers dealing with Garland's earlier activities to the Director of Public Prosecutions in London who tried to pass the buck back to Hong Kong.

The Foreign Office has admitted that GCHQ tipped-off Frank Wilks about the *NS/Mirror* inquiry. We have evidence that a similar official tip-off was passed to Garland — but his evasive action was not wholly successful. He is now confined to the colony, and his case will be heard in the autumn.

Zimbabweans' last hope

David Holmes writes: Chosen Nkala and Maxine Tshuma, the two Zimbabwean girls seeking admission as students to either the United Kingdom or the Irish Republic, (see last week's NS) continued to face stern resistance this week. Pressure from Fine Gael, the Irish opposition party has failed to sway the mind of Minister of Justice Gerrard Collins, who is steadfast in his decision to refuse the girls admission to Ireland.

The issue has attracted considerable attention in the Irish press and has even been debated by the Irish Cabinet. The Irish Embassy in London says it is standard practice in such cases not to make the reason for exclusion public, but it is believed the decision follows recognised procedure under the common travel agreement between Ireland and the UK. Under the agreement, immigration officials of either country will refuse entry to aliens if they are satisfied they intend to travel to the other country and would be refused entry if they did so.

Presumably, in the present case, the girls were refused admission as a matter of course because they had already been refused entry to the UK — although they have made it clear they now wish to stay and study in Dublin. In a leader last Thursday (24 July) the *Irish Times* suggested the onus was on Britain to clarify the matter.

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Meanwhile, the British government takes the view that it can do nothing while the girls remain in Ireland. A plea to Lord Carrington for assistance from the Foreign Office was refused on the grounds that the girls were outside British jurisdiction, and this view is shared by the Home Office.

Failing a last minute change of mind by Gerrard Collins, the girls were to be removed from Ireland on 1 August. They will then be flown from London to Zimbabwe, unless the Home Office intervenes and allows them to stay here. Timothy Raison, Secretary of State at the Home Office, still has absolute discretion in the matter.

Uganda declining

David Tereshchuk writes: Sluggishly, Uganda's military rulers are preparing for general elections — the first since 1962 — to be held on 30 September. It is hard to believe that anything more 'democratic' will happen than the imposition of a new Milton Obote regime, backed by what is, in effect, a Tanzanian army of occupation.

Whoever gains power will have to deal with an economic nightmare. Apart from the horrors of the Karamoja famine, where relief efforts are being frustrated by armed renegades, the country's formal economy scarcely exists. Obote's talk of 'reconstruction' must be put against the daily reality of empty desks in every ministry. A middle-ranking civil-servant's salary buys little more than a few beers, so every state employee supplements his income with moonlighting, graft or smuggling.

Meat, when it can be found, changes hands at a black-market price five or six times the official level, and the citizens of the western towns of Masaka and Mbarara have told the ruling Military Commission that last year's war damage cannot be made good in face of regular robberies on the road from Kampala.

Coffee, the main revenue crop, is still being exported. But it goes through Tanzania, where an undisclosed proportion of the price is held back to pay for the expeditionary army stationed in Uganda. A former finance minister estimates that this arrangement costs Uganda about £2 million a month.

The Military Commission, which removed the civilian president Godfrey Binaisa, supports Obote's return, and is plainly underpinned by the Tanzanian army. (A Tanzanian colonel led Binaisa's escort when he was briefly allowed out of house arrest to go to hospital.) Binaisa's predecessor Yusuf Lule, exiled in Kenya, accuses the Tanzanians of 'sitting back content' while the new Uganda National Liberation Army harasses his supporters. UNLA is recruited mostly from the north and owes its allegiance to the chairman and the military chief of staff in the Commission, both Obote's allies.

There is evidence that UNLA troops have harassed and beaten up members of Lule's (predominantly Catholic and conservative) Democratic Party. 'We are grateful to Tanzania for helping to get rid of Amin', says Lule, but goes on: 'Uganda is not a sovereign country. The elections will be a mockery unless we can have an independent monitoring force as in Zimbabwe.'

Obote himself sees more virtue in the idea, but Julius Nyerere, his sponsor in Dar-es-Salaam, has been notably cool in responding to suggestions that his troops in Uganda might be replaced by a mixed Commonwealth force. Nyerere's attitude sits poorly with his enthusiasm for a similar arrangement during the Zimbabwean elections — and even with the warning in his own book *Man and Development:*

> It is impossible for one people to free another people, or even to defend the freedom of another people. Freedom won for a people by outsiders is lost to those outsiders, however good their intentions. . . .

THE BAR
Anna Coote

After dinner ritual gets out of hand at Grays Inn

A rousing chorus of 'Rule Britannia'

ASPIRING BARRISTERS, as is well known, must eat their way into their profession. It is one of the central vertebrae in the ancient spine of the British legal system that pupils will not be called to the bar until they have eaten enough meals at the Inns of Court.

Not that one can just pop in, on a whim, for egg and chips at tea time. One must put on one's gown and turn back one's mind to the days — not so long past — when a successful applicant to the bar had to be 'a gentleman of good standing, not engaged in trade'. One must rigorously abide by the customs of one's Inn (and each is a law unto itself), or one may find oneself at a grim disadvantage later on in one's career.

If the quality of the legal service provided by each Inn were to be judged by the loving care with which its dinner-eating rituals were preserved, then we could be sure to find the most skilled advocates at Grays Inn. For there, when the food has been eaten, when the judges have retired to their private rooms, when permission has been given to smoke, and when the port has started to circulate . . . the splendid game of 'challenging' begins.

Imagine, if you will, a hall full of grown-up lawyers who have just eaten dinner. One of them may suddenly leap on to the bench on which he (or she) has been sitting, and challenge another to recite a poem. There will need to be a reason for the challenge: perhaps the other person has mispronounced the challenger's name. And it must be addressed to the most senior barrister in the hall. 'Master Senior, I wish to challenge X, on account of Y, to do Z. . . ' (in suitably eloquent courtroom phrases, of course). Master Senior will call upon X to make a speech in self defence and if that is unsuccessful, then X must pay a fine, in the form of a bottle of port, or else recite the damn poem.

The port flows; challenge follows challenge as barristers and their pupils leap up on to their benches and down again; and phrases are turned ever more wittily as the evening wears on. At a recent guest night, for example, avocado pears had been served for dinner. A young man who had brought his girl friend to dine with him wished to challenge another

young man who was sitting nearby: it was alleged that the latter had remarked that the lady had 'a lovely pair'. In defence, he protested that he had been referring to the avocado and to the avocado alone. Master Senior declared that he could not judge the merits of the case until he had seen for himself. So the unfortunate young woman was marched to the top of the hall to show her 'pair' to the eminent barrister. All good, clean fun.

Sometimes things get a little out of hand. On Thursday, 10 July, the after-dinner rituals were in full swing. Songs had been sung, poetry had been recited, and everybody was talking and laughing and drinking and smoking in the usual fashion — until a prominent and influential member of the Inn, Ms Clarissa Dickson-Wright, addressed the senior barrister. Master Senior, Sir, she said, these people (indicating a group of eight students) had not been contributing to the evening's entertainment; she moved that they be allowed to sing a song.

One of the eight protested that they did not know any songs to sing. Master Senior replied, in a light-hearted tone, that he found their behaviour offensive nonetheless; he would give them five minutes to come up with a song. Another of them rose to offer, on behalf of the eight, to pay the customary fine. Ms Dickson-Wright objected: Master Senior should order them to leave, she said. Master Senior ruled that the case was proved and the eight students must leave.

Diners at Grays Inn sit in 'messes' of four. Of the offending group, one 'mess' consisted of two Africans, a West Indian and an Indian. A quick glance around the hall would have suggested that they were the only black students present.

They were not keen to go. They asked for leave to appeal to the judges (a part of the 'challenging' ritual which is rarely used). Ms Dickson-Wright got up on her bench again. If they wanted to appeal under the Race Relations Act, she said, they were welcome to try. But if they were not going to leave, then let a round of *Rule Britannia* be sung for them. Most of the diners joined in a rousing chorus of *Rule Britannia.* The eight students had no alternative but to walk out.

As the final verse drew to a close, the West Indian and one of the Africans returned. The West Indian stood up to express his disgust — but was jeered and shouted down; then the African student rose to his feet. He felt it was his duty, he said, to report the matter to his father, a high-ranking official at the Nigerian embassy. He would insist that a top-level complaint be made. He demanded the name of the senior barrister — that night a Mr Andrew Pinder.

The room fell silent. The diners were deeply embarrassed. They apologised profusely. They begged the young African to appeal instead to the judges of Grays Inn. The two men swept out, unrepentant. Ms Dickson-Wright went to find the remaining six and took them off to a local hostelry, where she bought them champagne and invited them to dine with her at one of her clubs.

It was a chastening experience for all. The young African father has never had any connection with the Nigerian embassy.

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Billy's deadly shadow

Last year the *New Statesman* reported on the entrepreneurial excesses of the Carter family, notably those of Billy, the president's brother (2 March 1979). Then on 22 June 1979 we reported a new set of military threats which the United States was preparing against Libya. This volatile combination of private and public policy has been ignited once again during the past two weeks in Washington, in an affair the American press is calling 'Billygate'. CLAUDIA WRIGHT is the only journalist to whom the Libyan ambassador in Washington has granted an interview, and her report unravels several plots, not least of which is a scheme by two Washington newspapers to destroy the Carter presidency.

BILLY CARTER faces three accusations: that he traded on the family relationship for his own enrichment; that he was willing to accept advances from Libyan government officials in return for his influence with the President on Libya's behalf; and that, not content with a Libyan payoff, he offered his influence in Tripoli to obtain increased oil supplies for an American company that promised him millions of dollars in commission.

Even if true, none of these activities is illegal. Washington is filled with respectable ladies and gentlemen who make their living trading a commodity of dubious value called influence. But for those who ply their trade on behalf of foreign governments, there is an obligation imposed by law to register. Justice Department files show that in 1979 there were just over 6,000 registered foreign agents currently busy around town.

The files did not include Billy Carter until 14 July when, after nearly two years of Justice Department investigation, threats of prosecution and editorial noise, he filed his registration form. This admitted to receiving a silver and leather saddle, a platter, four gold bracelets, a suit of clothes, and two fully-paid trips to Libya. Carter also declared he was not presently acting on behalf of Libya. Two payments totalling $220,000, evidence of which had been picked up by the FBI in June and which reactivated the investigation, were identified by Billy as the installments on a loan from the Libyans, not as a gift or payment.

The registration started a new press blitz, primarily by the *Washington Star* (owned by Time Inc.) and the *Washington Post* (proprietor of *Newsweek*). In response to their investigations, a number of new disclosures has been made by the White House press secretary, Jody Powell, by legal counsel, Lloyd Cutler, by the national security adviser, Zbigniew Brzezinski, and by Mrs Rosalynn Carter. Among these is the White House claim that last November Billy Carter was asked to use his influence with the Libyans in the matter of the American hostages in Iran. According to the White House story, Rosalynn mentioned to Jimmy, who later dropped a hint to Zbigniew, that he should let Billy know that it would be a nice idea for Qaddafi to intercede with the Ayatollah Khomeini in Tehran for the release of the hostages. Both Billy and Colonel Qaddafi are said to have obliged.

The Libyan version (as yet unpublished in the United States) of Billy's contacts with Tripoli, his role at the White House and in the hostage episode, is quite different.

Through the mountain of circumstantial detail and calculated official ambiguity runs the thread — explained by the newspapers in special ethnological reports on the Arab mind — that the Libyans are a crafty yet traditional bunch of bedouins, who value the blood tie above all other relationships, and so saw Billy Carter as a natural conduit to the President. But since the Libyans are also, according to the editorialists, the world's most bloodthirsty terrorists, Billy was part of a nefarious scheme to draw US Middle Eastern policy into Qaddafi's clutches. Among other things, therefore, the President has been accused of covering up his brother's dealings with Libya and secretly obstructing the course of the Justice Department's investigation into Billy in order to let him off the hook. Such a President, the pressmen have concluded, does not

deserve to collect the vast majority of votes he piled up during the Democratic primary campaign, nor the party nomination next month. In Washington the *Star* and the *Post* have therefore begun to identify a 'groundswell' of opinion within the Democratic Party to knock Carter out of the presidential election.

'The press is trying to make milk out of water', says Ali El-Houderi, the chief Libyan representative in the United States. 'Billy is not a politician, not even popular in the media. They think of him just as a funny man. He was not meant to be used by the Libyans. Eventually people will be shocked when they have all the facts. They think something has gone on. It hasn't'.

WHAT HAPPENED IS THIS. Billy Carter first heard about Libya early in 1978 from a local newspaper story. A Georgia business friend told him that the oil state, which supplies the United States with roughly 10 per cent of its oil imports, was worth a closer look. The two, Billy Carter and Randy Coleman, requested — and got — a briefing on Libya in March 1978, from the National Security Council staff. Six months later, Billy was in Libya as the guest of Ahmed Shahati, one of the most powerful men in Tripoli's bureaucracy and head of the Foreign Liaison Office.

In February, 1979, Shahati led a delegation to the United States, and Billy escorted him around the country. But Billy's remarks about 'the Jewish media tearing up the Arab countries', and about there being 'a hell of a lot more Arabians than there is Jews', led to a press outcry and an abrupt decline in Billy's lucrative speaking engagements and trade promotions.

An old marine buddy who was connected to a Florida oil refiner, Charter Oil Company, encouraged Billy to think of setting up as a broker between the Libyans and the oil company. In April 1979, the company lost 20 per cent of its oil allocation from Libya. Accounts vary on whether Charter approached Billy or Billy Charter, but on 21 August 1979, a deal was struck. Billy would be paid a commission of 55 cents per barrel of additional oil he could secure from Tripoli before a deadline of mid-January 1980. By then Billy had his sights set on earning several million dollars. Ten days after the agreement with Charter, Billy left for his second trip to Libya.

The Libyans say they knew nothing of Billy's deal, and indicate there was no likelihood of a backdoor arrangement with Charter. At the December OPEC meeting, Libya indicated it would impose a 16 per cent cut in April 1980. El-Houderi says the reduction was not negotiable: 'There is a limit. We couldn't cut old customers (to increase Charter's share)'. El-Houderi says he does not know whether the oil company paid Billy anything, but 'he got nothing from us'.

What he does admit giving Billy is a loan of $220,000. In August 1979, Billy was desperate for cash and in trouble with the US tax authorities. He proposed a second visit to the Libyans, apparently hoping to talk about Charter's oil and collect his commission before time ran out on his agreement. He was mistaken. The visit was inconvenient for the Foreign Liaison Office in August. Billy insisted on going (with his wife), and on arrival demanded a meeting with Qaddafi. He waited four weeks without seeing him. El-Houderi says that Carter then asked for a loan. On his return to the US, he kept pressing the oil issue — the Libyans said they couldn't help. However, they were prepared to lend the money because they felt Billy's loss of income had been due to his association with them.

Cheques for $220,000 were signed by El-Houderi in January and April, payable on an American bank account. Billy's registration file declares that a loan for $500,000 had been negotiated. Charges that the money was compensation for Billy's political influence, or an advance by the Libyans for commissions on a future increase in Charter's oil allocation are false, El-Houderi says.

He also disputes the White House and press versions of Billy's role in the Iranian hostage episode. According to the Libyan, late in November he received a call from Brzezinski's

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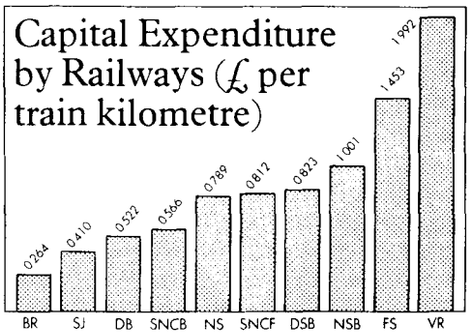

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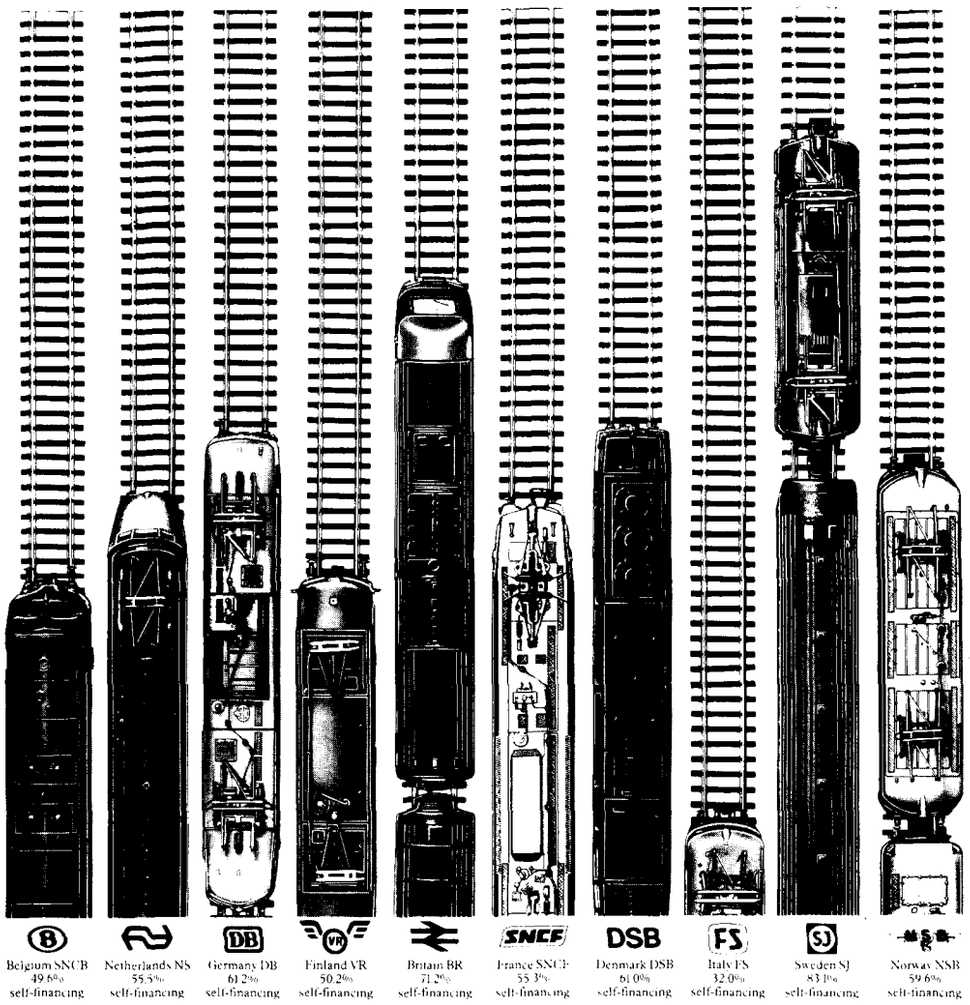
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Britain BR 71.2% self-financing
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**THE SWEDISH EXPERIENCE. Since the collection of data in 1977, the situation of the railways in Sweden has changed drastically. A massive injection of national funds has precipitated a reappraisal of investment plans and the fares structure. The experiment has really only just started but the first signs are that the railways have increased their relative importance in the transport network.*

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This is the age of the train

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secretary, requesting a meeting. This took place on 27 November when El-Houderi arrived. 'There in the office was Billy Carter. I did not know he would be there.' El-Houderi denies the White House claim that the meeting was set up by Billy. Brzezinski did the talking. He wanted to know 'if I could be of help in persuading brother Qaddafi to persuade Khomeini to release the hostage.' El-Houderi says the request was relayed to Tripoli and agreed to without asking for a *quid pro quo* from the Americans.

THE YEAR had already been marked by severe tension along the Egyptian border, which the US was helping Egypt to reinforce, and by the on-again, off-again embargo by the US government of delivery of military transport and Boeing 747 aircraft, which the Libyans had ordered and paid for several years before. El-Houderi says that no offer on the planes was sought or made at his meeting with Brzezinski or subsequently. He denies allegations that Libya connived with Billy or with any other intermediaries to obtain release of the planes. Libya, he points out, could easily recover its money and buy Italian, French or Soviet substitutes. Instead, he regards the planes as a test of will with the US which the Libyans want to win openly, without subterfuge, bribery or backstage influence.

El-Houderi says that Qaddafi agreed to relay the White House message to Teheran, and sent a special emissary, Abuzayed Omar Durdah, to carry the American offer to Khomeini. On 6 December, Brzezinski asked El-Houderi for a second meeting. By this time there had been a demonstration and attack on the US embassy in Tripoli (on 2 December), and the State Department was publicly fulminating about cutting off diplomatic relations. Brzezinski and the Libyan met alone, and then with the President in the Oval Office. The conversation was brief, according to El-Houderi, and concentrated on the hostages in Iran and the US embassy incident in Tripoli. The President was 'polite and charming. He asked me to deliver a message to brother Qaddafi concerning the hostages and his concern (about the embassy in Tripoli). We talked about sending (another) delegation and the President made it clear he wanted positive results.'

El-Houderi would not be more specific about the contents of the American message to Iran, but four days later, on 10 December, Qaddafi himself gave a broad hint of what was in the works. He told a reporter from the *New York Times* that he had had talks with Iran on the hostages. 'If the US were to throw the Shah out of America', he is quoted as saying, 'or to inform him publicly that he is not wanted as a political refugee and take some action to try to repatriate some of the money he took', the way to a solution might be open.

On 2 December the Shah left hospital in New York, with the White House making clear it expected him to leave the country after a brief recuperation in Texas. Apparently the White House had signalled to Qaddafi that it was willing to go along with other terms, for El-Houderi says he was confident that Khomeini would agree. He refuses to disclose the terms that were discussed, or whether Iran or the US caused the mediation effort to fail. All he will say is that when 'all the facts' are known, 'Carter (the President) will gain something out of this . . . he is going to be as clean as before . . . and it will improve his image.' He states explicitly that a third meeting with Brzezinski, reported by the American press, did not occur, and he is emphatic that Billy had no role or influence in what transpired.

The White House has an obvious sensitivity to signs, last December and now, that the President may have been hinting at a change in his Middle Eastern policy after re-election. This is precisely what Qaddafi claimed in his 10 December interview with the *Times*. There is some evidence that Jewish members of the White House staff, who have long contested Brzezinski on Middle Eastern policy, were responsible for a campaign of press leaks, which began immediately after the first El-Houderi meeting with Brzezinski. At the time the leakers thought they were blocking rumoured Brzezinski overtures to the PLO.

By making Billy appear responsible for contacting the Libyan embassy, the White House thought of evading responsibility for the direct and personal approach to Qaddafi that it still does not want to own up to. To the press, this has made Billy look an even more certain agent of Libyan influence. And because of antagonism, within the White House and in editorial circles, towards Libya and the possibility of a Carter shift towards the Arabs, Billy's case has offered a perfect setup for attacking the President.

This is how an otherwise minor affair of a jealous and greedy brother can cast a deadly shadow over presidential politics. And the White House hasn't helped by its effort to break free of Billy's self-serving exploits. It failed to tell the full truth about the contacts with Libya, and probably sought to delay Billy's registration until after the Republican Convention, to minimize the damage to the President himself. The White House hasn't been sure which was more damaging — the connection with Billy or the connection with Libya. The press has been more than happy to tar the president with both feathers.

Peter Tatchell

French fight on for control of land in New Hebrides

ONLY HOURS before independence celebrations were due to start in the New Hebrides this week, rebel leader Jimmy Stevens again urged his supporters to reject the authority of the Vanuaaku Party central government, making it clear he would resort to arms if necessary.

Despite the recent Anglo-French intervention to quell Stevens' rebellion, he remains at liberty, and his separatist radio station continues to broadcast anti-Vanuaaku propaganda. Since the intervention he has been permitted to hold two mass rallies against the government, and already the significance of the Anglo-French initiative in securing long-term peace prospects for the New Hebrides looks doubtful. This was Stevens' fourth attempt at a secessionist coup and his right-wing American supporters are unlikely to give up. In addition, the French have publicly warned that they will never abandon the interests of the French planters — who own 80 per cent of the islands' arable land and whose privileged position is threatened by the land reform platform of the majority Vanuaaku Party. On the day before the rebellion was ended the French Resident Commissioner on the New Hebrides, Jean-Jacques Robert flew to Santo to tip-off Stevens and the French settlers of the imminent troop arrivals. The French have an interest in ensuring a successful transfer to independence: afterwards there will be no British responsibility for the islands, making it easier for the French to intervene to defend their planters, if necessary.

Stevens is the leader of the Nagriamel Party which collects most of its support on the island of Santo, though even here Vanuaaku won a clear majority in the general election last November. Stevens' alliance with American business interests dates back to 1970 when his political ambition was an independent Federation of the northern islands based on the Nagriamel party, traditionally a movement advocating land reform, a rejection of western values and a return to ancient village customs. At that time a Hawaiian-based land developer Eugene Peacock was buying up land in Santo for sub-division and resale to Vietnam veterans. When he ran foul of the Vanuaaku Party, the colonial administration abandoned further sub-division and Peacock turned to Stevens. In return for supporting Stevens' plan for a Nagriamel Federation he was promised the right to sub-divide the land for resale at a profit.

Peacock introduced Stevens to Michael Oliver, a property magnate from Nevada who had published a book in 1968 outlining a blue-print for an ideal free enterprise society with no taxation and no government regulation. Following the meeting Oliver set up the Phoenix Foundation to aid Nagriamel's separatist cause. In 1974 Oliver urged white settlers in Abaco, in the Bahamas, to secede but came unstuck when the Bahamas government seized a shipment of arms bound for Abaco and declared Oliver a prohibited immigrant.

After the Abaco debacle, Oliver turned his attention to the New Hebrides, setting aside £125,000 for his plans. He provided Stevens with a radio transmitter, wrote the Nagriamel independence constitution, produced its passports, minted its coins and designed its flag. The colonial administration, embarrassed by Oliver's adventurer style, banned him and his associates from the islands.

However, the French allowed one of these associates — Thomas Eck, legal adviser to the Phoenix Foundation — into Santo this April to deliver Oliver's instructions to Stevens and the French planters. The coup planned for 18 June failed because separatists on the island of Tanna moved too early on 27 May: Stevens followed suit the next day, sacking British and Vanuaaku offices, declaring his Republic of Vemarana. Soon afterwards Oliver announced, at a tax conference in the Bahamas, the establishment of a Vemarana Development Corporation with the aim of raising £4 million to buy two ships, two plans and land leases.

The French planters have been Stevens' natural allies. The new Vanaaku constitution says that all land belongs 'to the indigenous custom owners and their descendents.' The French could only continue working the land 'on a leasehold basis by arrangement with the local people.' The French resident Commissioner urged the organisation of a petition against this constitution last year and returned support with French-financed public works and direct gifts, such as a fishing boat. During the election French District Officials and gendarmes on Tanna turned a blind eye to assaults on Vanuaaku supporters by opposition supporters and French diplomats insisted that whatever the election results, the position of the French planters and the automony of the pro-French regions must be protected.

Some of the French planters are ex-Algerian 'piednoires' with OAS connections; an Australian businessman who was arrested last year on charges of illegally possessing weapons said he had been supplying them to French planters for months. The planters on Santo were in constant contact with Robert during the recent revolt and were assured by him that French troops would protect their interests.

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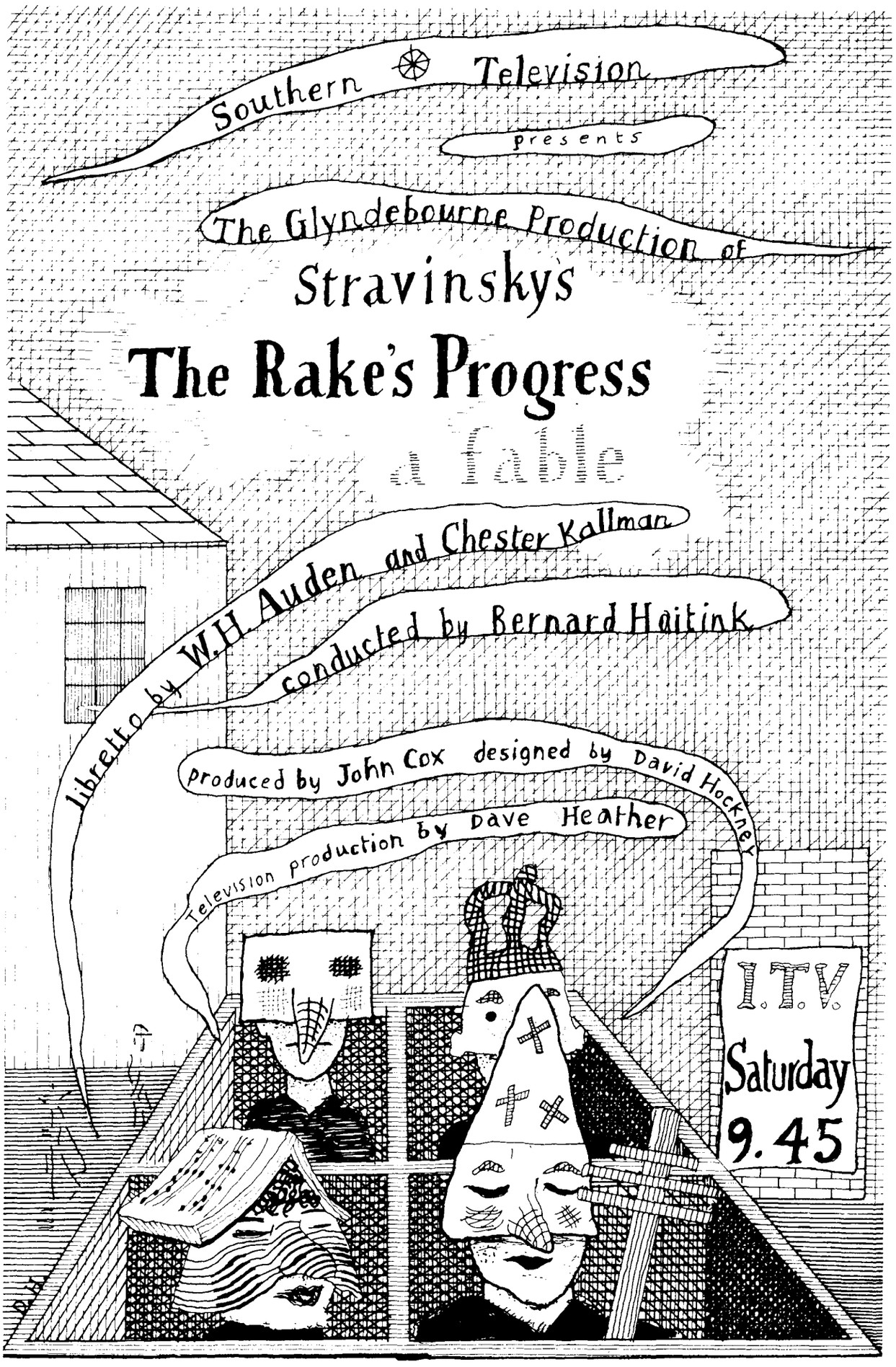

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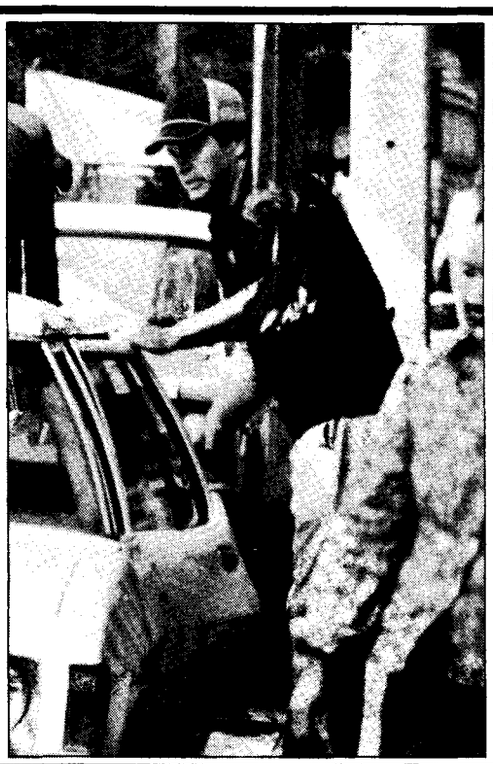
America's second war in Indochina . . .

On this page, two Americans conducting 'an appropriate extension of our war in Vietnam': Jack Williamson (right) of 'Task Force 80' and Lionel Rosenblatt (far right) of the 'Kampuchea Emergency Group'. Opposite: Khmer Rouge troops with Western supplies, inside Cambodia; far right, border-area geography.



Eric Piper (Syndication International); both photographs

Five years ago a peasant nation, Vietnam, forced superpower America to abandon Indochina. Or so it seemed. Today, America, allied with China (and supported by Britain) uses Cambodia as a new battlefield; and its latest proxies are Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge, the most thorough mass murderers since Hitler. JOHN PILGER, whose reports in the *New Statesman* last year were among the first to alert the world to the depth of the Cambodian tragedy, has returned to Indochina. This is his report.

A FEW MILES from Cambodia, on the Thailand border, is a suburban Fort Apache now sluiced with red mud as the monsoon settles over Indochina. It is a warren of attractive houses on piles, accommodating newly prosperous Thai families whose pick-up trucks and polythene-wrapped Hondas, and tape decks and winsome children, reflect the entrepreneurial opportunities of the past year, delivered by the unique tragedy across the border. There is a supermarket, proclaiming 'Pepsi Superman' and 'For Rent' signs (Short or Long Time'; the ambiguity, strictly Thai, embraces a wide range of leasing); and there are foreigners, with pensions secure and motives not entirely altruistic, for which these services are intended.

The Catholic Relief Services has a house here, a place of urgency commanded by a former Green Berets officer, now a Jesuit priest. A short distance away is the border headquarters of UNICEF, the United Nations Children's Fund, with its hi-there receptionist, Year of the Child decor and refrigerated air conditioning; and there is the World Relief 'post', from which thirteen missionaries of the Assembly of God go forth into the Khmer Rouge fortress of Sa Kaeo, known locally as a United Nations refugee camp, to inform thousands of opaque eyes that Jesus Christ will save them, if not their victims. Last year Rosalynn Carter came to the same camp and said America would save them, which was more to the point.

This is Aranyaprathet, Thailand, overlaid with Amarillo, Texas and Saigon before it 'fell' — the latter familar to, and mourned by, many of the foreigners here. Indeed, outside Prol's restaurant, where *everybody* goes, the Hondarised cowboys wear shades and black hats, evocative of the view from the verandah of the Continental Palace before it lapsed into communist hands; inside, with Simon and Garfunkel and other memories on tape, with hamburgers, Tom Collins and dry martinis served by children, the cowboys comprise an assortment of freelancers, some not unlike the *paparazzi* to which Michael Herr's 'Dispatches' was devoted, some on research grants, acknowledged 'experts' on a Cambodia they have not seen, some in the surgical uniforms of M*A*S*H with stethoscopes positioned for maximum chic, and which they appear reluctant to take off. Overheard: 'There's this Italian medical team sitting in Bangkok, right? We're up to here in fucking medical teams, but these guys are demanding a spot in the chorus line. Maybe they can take over the Valium programme. Three thousand downers a day to the Pol Potters should keep them busy'. And there are tourists, asking: 'Does this place have a bathroom?' And there are men on United States Government business.

These men live in and work from a large house with a radio transmitter on the roof and a fleet of unmarked white station wagons coming and going and which also have transmitters. This is the operations base of the Kampuchea Emergency Group, or KEG, whose activities somehow have escaped the otherwise saturation media coverage of the humanitarian aspects of the border. The men of KEG are attached to the US Embassy in Bangkok and report variously to the State Department, USAID, the CIA and, of course, to Ambassador Morton Abramowitz, a Pentagon China specialist who two years ago replaced Charles Whitehouse, an advocate of 'normalising' with Vietnam, and whose appointment was greeted by a Bangkok newspaper with these comments:

> As his past activities indicate, Abramowitz is one hope of the United States in its effort to cooperate with China to block Soviet and Vietnamese influence in South East Asia.

Both the appointment of Abramowitz and the setting up of KEG were the decisions of Dr Zbigniew Brzezinski, President Carter's National Security Adviser who, it might be fairly said, has taken over where Dr Henry Kissinger left off, as the West's leading warlord. Certainly, the current American war in Indochina, in which American blood, B52s and the products of the Dow Chemical Company are not needed, is his.

ENTER Lionel A. Rosenblatt, formerly of the United States Embassy, Saigon, now 'refugee co-ordinator' of KEG, Thailand, whose words are these:

> I feel that what we're doing is an appropriate extension of our war in Vietnam. I think it's important for America to remember its *responsibilities* in this region, even though it doesn't have the high security threshhold that we used to have with half a million men here. I think that actually the only problem with America in this part of the world is that, having fought the Vietnam war, most people at home have retired completely in terms of involvement. Well, the people who are working here with us, some are old Indochina hands and some aren't, are people who are interested in seeing that humanitarian effort continue, who are concerned about the life-threatening processes here. Okay, so the general inclination is forget South East Asia, that was the sixties, early seventies. Now *we* say we need to be involved, and there *will* be an increasing US involvement in South East Asia in the 1980s. And the new line, if you like, is right here in Thailand, okay?

Deja vu! With the exception of Life Threatening Processes (LTP?), which is new issue, such words might have come echoing through that fabled, unlit tunnel of the sixties and seventies, had they not been uttered the other day, though I have to say that to describe the Vietnam war as a 'humanitarian effort' is premature; history is being re-written in South East Asia, but not *that* quickly. The mission of KEG is indeed the 'appropriate extension': it is to oversee the distribution of Western supplies, which are funded largely by the United States and the EEC, including Britain, to the proxies in the latest Indochina war:

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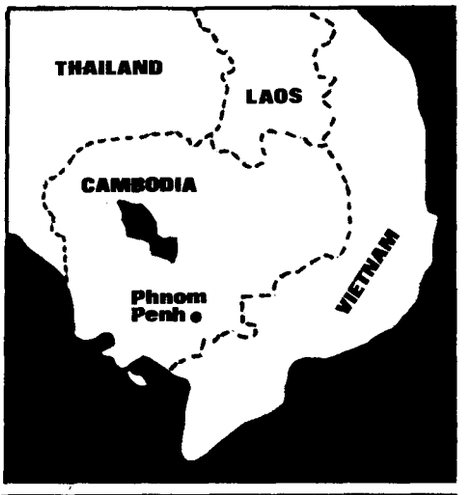
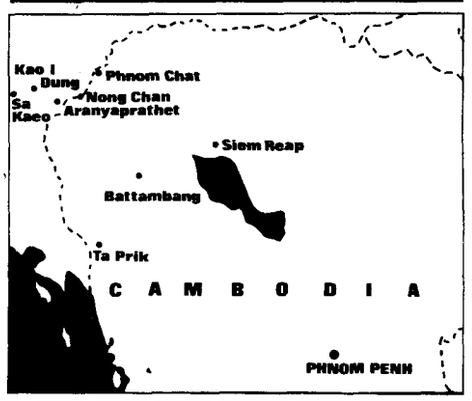
Only the allies are new

Eric Piper (Syndication International)





the 'guerrilla forces' with a haven on the border, namely the Khmer Rouge, proportionately the most thorough mass murderers in modern times, whose demonry included the building of Auschwitz in Asia*, whom even the President of the United States has described as 'the world's worst violaters of human rights'.

This strategy is being carried out under the cover of humanitarianism; its objective is, to borrow from Dr Kissinger, the 'destabilisation' of Cambodia and, more important, of Vietnam. The following effects are desired: the isolation and wrecking of Vietnam's economy, so that its spirit is finally broken and its revolution converted to the brutalised, authoritarian image into which it is presently cast, thereby forcing it into satellite dependency on the Soviet Union; the discrediting, in the eyes of the world, of a generation of Vietnamese struggle and sacrifice, so that the US intervention in Indochina and its use of Vietnam as a laboratory of rampant war technology is historically justified, thereby legitimising future adventures and drawing revenge for the humiliation of a 'lost' war; and the continuation of an unwanted war of attrition between the Soviet Union and China and of the obsession of each with the other's 'expansionism' (Mao's original revisionist charge having faded into obsolescence now that the 'Sound of Music' is ensconced in Peking). This is the Brzezinski strategy for the 1980s. There is no reason to doubt that it will be the Reagan strategy. Divide and rule, I believe it is called.

BRZEZINSKI'S Indochina war began with Ambassador Abramowitz's arrival in Bangkok in the summer of 1978 and the subsequent abandonment of a momentous chance of peace, to which reference should be made here because it went largely unreported and because it offers a perspective on Vietnam's relationship with the Soviet Union that is very different from the currently propagated version. In the autumn of 1978 a mission of doctors and nutritionists sent by Senator Edward Kennedy's Committee on Vietnam reported 'shock' at the health of the Vietnamese people they saw and appealed to President Carter to 'bring the people of Vietnam back from the precipice of calamity . . . and to save thousands of men, women and children by a single act of magnanimity'. The report made special mention of extreme food shortages and the need of skimmed milk for children. On the advice of Dr Brzezinski, the President's response was to sign a renewal of the total American embargo of Vietnam, including food.

It was then that Vietnam's overtures to America, of which little was heard in the West and which the Vietnamese saw as the means of extricating themselves from the cold war between the Soviet Union and China, became exhausted. An abbreviation of an excellent analysis by Derek Davies, editor of the conservative *Far East Economic Review*, is worth quoting here:

> At the time of Carter's election at the end of 1976 Moscow was losing ground in Vietnam . . . Vietnamese Vice-Foreign Minister Phan Hien had made it clear that Vietnam did not accept the view of ASEAN (Association of South East Asian Nations) as an imperialist creation, nor did it support the Soviet proposal for an Asian collective security treaty. At home, Vietnam was re-absorbing the South with kid gloves.
>
> Hanoi had irritated Moscow with its membership of the World Bank, the IMF and the Asian Development Bank and was bent on improving relations with China. Peking was responding, recalling the late premier Chou En Lai's concern for Vietnam. In the spring of 1977, Hanoi publicly confirmed the pragmatism with which it was prepared to tackle its economic problems. It promulgated a foreign investment code which was both liberal and flexible, providing for joint enterprises and wholly-owned foreign projects. In the spring of 1978 Pham Van Dong indicated that Vietnam would be willing to drop all preconditions to talks with the Americans — even reparations. There was no response from Washington. The US again voted against the (Asian Development) bank being used to channel funds to Vietnam.

'The tragic circle', as Davies describes the American rebuff, was closed on 3 November 1978 when Vietnam had no alternative but to join COMECON, and to slip further into the Soviet sphere. (Indeed, I am reliably told, two officials of the Asian Development Bank were instructed to 'lose the files on Vietnam'.)

With famine a real prospect, there also was no alternative but to end the 'Cholon Chinese' control of the rice market in southern Vietnam, and this helped to precipitate the first substantial and brutally encouraged exodus of 'boat people'. With Chinese military advisers at his elbow, Pol Pot increased his attacks on the ricelands of the 'Parrot's Beak' to a level of almost daily atrocities in Vietnamese border villages; and finally the Vietnamese, who had offered the Khmer Rouge a demilitarised border with international inspection, had little choice but to 'invade' Pol Pot's charnel house (Why is it that we think of Europe as having been 'liberated', not 'invaded'?) and, in so doing, put an end to the genocide of the Khmer people. Vietnam, having journeyed through a history of courage and pain, with millions dead and maimed, and having expelled both its colonial masters and a great power (which no other small country has ever done) was now an international pariah; and with the nod from Washington — that is from Brzezinski, *not* from Cyrus Vance — China attacked massively from the north.

THREE WEEKS ago, in Tokyo, President Carter and Chairman Hua Guofeng met for the first time. It was indeed 'an historic meeting', as their spokesmen effused; for

*NS 2 May 1980.

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here was the remarkable alliance begun by Nixon and Kissinger in 1972 being consummated with the tacit agreement that the Pentagon would arm China (no longer, 'Red China', of course) and with the following communiqué:

> There is essential agreement between the United States and the People's Republic of China with regard to strategic perspectives and particularly as they relate to . . . the invasion of Cambodia by Soviet backed Vietnamese.

In other words, it would seem that America has abandoned the relatively cautious position taken by Secretary Vance before his resignation — that Washington neither supported the Phnom Penh government nor the Khmer Rouge — and has given full approval to China's Indochina policy, which is to subdue Vietnam, by force or attrition, and to restore the Khmer Rouge to power in 'Democratic Kampuchea' with a new, respectable image and, should America insist, in the guise of a 'non-aligned' coalition. The United States and its Western partners already are playing their part by supplying the 'new' Khmer Rouge with 'relief'.

This returns us to the Thai border, where the new line is drawn, and to those who implement the American side of the bargain, or 'the increasing involvement in the 1980s', as the Deer Hunters of the Kampuchean Emergency Group see it. Indeed, the identity of the chief of KEG underscores the unflagging continuity of American involvement in Indochina. He is Colonel Michael Eiland, an illustrious Deer Hunter. In 1969/70 Eiland, then a major, was operations officer of a clandestine Special Forces group code-named Daniel Boone which, as William Shawcross documents in *Sideshow: Kissinger, Nixon and the Destruction of Cambodia**, was responsible for the reconnaisance of the secret and illegal bombing that tore apart Cambodia's fragile neutrality and ushered in a decade of war and butchery and, as a consequence, was a catalyst for the triumph of the Khmer Rouge. Colonel Eiland, having indirectly given the Khmer Rouge a helping hand a decade ago, is once again reaching out to them, though several million people have died in the interim.

In seniority, a commanding, burly figure in a yellow baseball cap is above both Rosenblatt and Eiland. He is Jack Williamson, who was the USAID man in Laos during the 'destabilising' there in the early seventies. He is now the Pentagon's most important man in Thailand. 'Williamson's job', I was told, 'is to see that the Thais don't lose their nerve or focus on what's important: support for anti-Vietnamese forces, and that means Pol Pot'.

Williamson 'co-ordinates' and 'advises' Task Force 80, a special Thai Army intelligence unit assigned to 'police' the border camps. What that means is that Thai officers in civilian clothes command guerrilla groups both inside Thailand and when they move back into Cambodia. When a *Philadelphia Inquirer* reporter discovered 'Camp 42', a Khmer base run entirely by Thais, he was imprisoned and his film destroyed. Task Force 80 draws most of its funding *direct* from the US Embassy in Bangkok.

In the past few weeks the facade of the humanitarian operation along the border has begun to crumble. This is not to suggest that the international and voluntary relief agencies did not save a great many lives last year, when people fled from the Khmer Rouge enclaves in search of food, nor is it to impugn the motives of many individual aid officials. Indeed, it is the most dedicated among the aid people who now talk openly and with rising bitterness of their manipulation by their own bureaucracies, by the Thai military and by the Americans in Bangkok and on the border.

One UNICEF official was recalled to New York and threatened with dismissal if he continued to speak publicly of this manipulation and especially of Vietnam's humanitarian assistance to Cambodia, evidence of which he had seen. For agency people like him, the repatriation of 8,600 from the Thai camps is

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the sorest case in point. All these 'returnees' came from Sa Kaeo camp, inside Thailand, which the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) administers, nominally, and the Khmer Rouge control in reality, dispensing aid and intimidation, not to mention burying people up to their necks as sport.

THE KHMER ROUGE in this camp have been rested and fattened by Western aid and, said a UN official who watched the first batch leave, 'they're ready to fight . . . we're sending back an entire division of the bastards. This is like a declaration of war'. An official of CARE, the American relief organisation, said, 'In a few months we'll have the starving babies back on television, the products of a war which this repatriation stunt makes damn sure will go on, and on.' The *Bangkok Post* reported:

> The followers of toppled premier Pol Pot, who exercises a strong hold over many of the camp's 30,000 refugees, want as many to return as possible to help wage a guerrilla war against Vietnam's forces. Pol Pot officials have been telling refugees that the United Nations would cut off food aid to them if they refused repatriation and that they had to return to Pol Pot controlled areas of the Thai-Kampuchean border. The Pol Pot followers, some of whom have told interviewers that they took part in mass executions during Pol Pot's days in power, have a ditty to reinforce their point. It goes:
>
> *Those of you who go back first will sleep on cots,*
> *Those who go back second will sleep on mats,*
> *Those who go back third will sleep in mud,*
> *Those who go back last will sleep under*
> *the ground.*

The UNHCR Chief Coordinator, Zia Rizvi, attempted to postpone the repatriation, but was turned down by the Thais. Predictably, the Vietnamese responded to the provocation with an attack that closed the 'land bridge' at Nong Chan and has stopped, perhaps only temporarily, the agencies' regular supply runs to such Khmer Rouge bases as Phnom Malai and Ta Prik in the south and Phnom Chat in the north. Certainly, my own journey across the border, to Phnom Chat, produced a spectacle of proof of how UNICEF and the Red Cross have restored the Khmer Rouge and helped to mould them into an effective force now estimated at 30,000 troops, or *double* their strength since the inception of 'cross border feeding'.

I travelled in a UNICEF Land Rover at the head of a convoy of forty trucks: seventeen loaded with food, seventeen with seed and the rest with agricultural kits and assorted 'goodies', which is a quaint term the agency people use for the West's largesse. Phnom Chat is a Khmer Rouge operations base set in forest, and bunkered, with land mines every fifteen yards. These were laid by courtesy of the Thai army, which keeps a commando unit encamped (and not very well camouflaged) on the periphery of the base *inside* Cambodia.

The base itself has a Task Force 80 'liaison officer' who was worried and displeased by the presence of foreigners other than those bearing 'goodies'. The UNICEF official leading the convoy, Phyllis Gestrin, a University of Texas psychology professor, was also worried and clearly disliked what she was doing. 'I don't want to think what this aid is doing; I don't trust these blackshirts,' she said.

Indeed, she could barely suppress her fear and turned the Land Rover around and pointed it back along the track. 'I always do this,' she said, 'so I can make a quick getaway'. Later, in a state of mounting unease, Phyllis drove us into a tree, then over ground which she earlier had pointed out as a possible minefield. 'Oh man', she said, 'this place gives me the creeps. Let's get it over with'.

When the forty trucks had dumped their 'goodies' at sheds in a clearing, Phyllis solicited the signature of one of three Khmer Rouge who had watched in silence from a thatched shelter, like the framed silhouettes of hanged men. 'I guess what I got here is a receipt', said Phyllis attempting a little laugh.

As we were preparing to leave, UNICEF's chief of North West Operations in Thailand, Ulf Krisstoffersson, arrived and proceeded to explain to me a complicated monitoring system that entailed checking 'non-resident family groups'. 'But', I said, 'the trucks have dumped the loads at the feet of the Khmer Rouge and it's they who distribute it'. 'Well, yes,' he said, 'but I want you to understand it gets to civilians, too. Many of these people are not Khmer Rouge; they're Khmer Serei'.

The Khmer Serei are usually described as 'right wing guerrillas'; in fact, their leaders are bandits who, with the Thais, run the black market and gold trade in the refugee camps on the Thai side. They have no real popular following; and what the Thai military is doing is grafting civilians, with no particular allegiance, on to Khmer Rouge bases — so that they can proceed with the fiction that the Khmer Rouge and the Khmer Serei are united against the Vietnamese. This also creates a justification for humanitarian aid, although the beneficiaries of the aid are clearly *no*

*André Deutsch, 1979.

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civilians, who look undernourished as well as terrified. By contrast, the Khmer Rouge are well fed and muscled. 'Okay', said Krisstoffersson, 'that man over there is a butcher and we're feeding his army, but *we* are not political.'

THE 'BUTCHER' is the base commander, a senior Pol Pot man who likes the foreign aid people to call him 'Monsieur Le President'. I asked to see Monsieur Le President and was assured that he would 'appear'; and I was soon confronted by a man with the calcified face of a small boy, and static eyes.

Last year, in Siem Reap province, I saw the mass grave of several thousand people, many of whom had been beaten to death. Now, smiling before me, was Pol Pot's equivalent of the governor of that province. His name is Nam Phann, which is probably a military alias. He was eager to confirm that Western aid had indeed sustained and restored the Khmer Rouge '. . . and thank you very much, and we wish for more'.

He said that 'our friends in the world' were the United Nations, the countries of ASEAN, especially Thailand and Singapore, and the United States. 'Oh yes, the United States!', he said, with feeling. But what of all the stories of atrocities and genocide under Pol Pot? 'Oh *that*', he replied. 'Those stories are completely untrue. They were made up by the Vietnamese to confuse the world.'

The agencies cannot plead naiveté; Red Cross medical teams have ministered to the Khmer Rouge inside Cambodia, at Ta Prik and Nong Pou, knowing that these are logistical forward positions. Our request to accompany them was refused; not even the day of departure could be disclosed. Why should a strictly humanitarian mission be secret?

'You must not be too hard on us', said a Red Cross official. 'The whole thing is rotten and we're sitting here in the middle of the garbage, trying to get off. What are we to do when Task Force 80 brings Khmer Rouge wounded to Sa Kaeo camp (inside Thailand) in the middle of the night and orders our teams to treat them? Of course, we have to patch them up, and the Thais send them back. If we pull out of the border, the Thais will prevent our supplies going through Bangkok to Phnom Penh, and the Phnom Penh authorities will regard us as accessories to their enemy, and make life difficult for our people there. It's an impossible situation for us.'

A senior UNICEF man said, 'I have the US embassy and the KEG people on the phone every day now. They keep telling us to hang in there. Well, I am fed up, and I want to get out. But they know that *we* know that if we desert the border, US funds will dry up. It's the crudest form of manipulation.'

Both the international agencies and the Americans have canvassed the voluntary agencies for those willing to take over the supply runs to the Khmer Rouge. Even the Catholic Relief Services, which always has had close relations with the Americans, has refused to 'hang in there'.

'They'll find some Volag (voluntary agency) to do it', said a former UN official. 'Most of them are Christian and anti-Communist and some are no more than cowboys, with too much money and too little to do, and feeding Pol Pot or flying out a jumbo load of lactating mothers is all the same to them'.

Three weeks ago James Grant, the new executive director of UNICEF, said in London:

> Reports that relief supplies are to be cut off in two weeks time are unfounded. The aim is to continue the supply of relief in situations where assurance can be given *by the Thai Government* that the aid is going only to civilian groups and not to Khmer guerrilla forces.

The italics are mine; the gall is his. The problem for Mr Grant, for UNICEF and for the Red Cross is that these Western government-funded agencies are now seen to be doing *precisely* what the Phnom Penh authorities have accused them of doing. Readers may recall last year's orchestrated public outcry, mostly from Geneva and New York, that the Phnom Penh government would not allow the agencies to send in a monitoring force of some 50 officials. There are now 78 aid officials in Phnom Penh; and whatever the shortcomings of effective relief monitoring *inside* Cambodia (Kampuchea), there is virtually none across the Thai border, which has received a hugely disproportionate share of Western charity.

Indeed, an internal UNICEF estimate is that 84 per cent of rice sent across the border is sold. By attracting up to 20 per cent of the population toward the border, farmers and draft animals are drawn away from the fields and from planting seed for the vital December harvest, the success of which will determine whether or not the nation is able to feed itself or is to remain dependent on foreign welfare. I have met few aid officials who do not regard the magnet of the border as an indirect means of de-stabilisation.

> 'The Khmer Rouge in this camp have been rested and fattened by Western aid. They are ready to fight'

Aside from shoring up the Khmer Rouge, there are other direct methods. Before I went to the Thai border I travelled extensively in Cambodia, including up to within a few miles of the border. A farmer, Ses Kravah, who has worked his fields in the village of Kob for thirty years, lamented that his crop would be stunted and a disastrous harvest assured. He had received seed from Phnom Penh, but had decided to buy most of his seed from across the nearby border, only to discover bags of empty husks and a germination rate of less than forty per cent. The World Food Programme has dumped, from the Thai side of the border, a great deal of this low-grade seed, for which the invoices can be traced to the US Embassy in Bangkok.

THE DISTORTION in the West of events in Indochina, which have allowed Washington to play its 'China Card' and Western governments (and the relief agencies) to cast themselves as saviours and the Vietnamese and the Phnom Penh government as wicked and obstructionist, has effectively complemented the de-stabilising activities along the border, where the media coverage has concentrated. (So much so that children in Kao I Dung camp have produced a piece of melancholy theatre that tells the story of Cambodia's suffering, beginning with little soliloquies about murder and starvation and ending with a tableau of foreign television crews gaping emptily at the dead.)

It is now clear that the insidious progaganda against Cambodia has been planned. In the *Guardian* of 8 January John Gittings reported:

> The Brzezinski strategy of crudely dividing Peking from Hanoi (thus pushing the Vietnamese toward Moscow) is compounded of deep feelings of hostility toward the only Asians who have managed to defeat the United States in War. One adviser on his staff has recently called Vietnam a 'cesspool of humanity.' Last November, State Department sources revealed their intention of mounting an international propaganda offensive to spread atrocity stories about Vietnamese behaviour in Kampuchea. Within days, presumably on White House instructions, US journalists in Bangkok and Singapore were shown the appropriate 'refugee stories' and Dr Brzezinski himself verbally briefed a distinguished foreign correspondent Washington columnist over lunch on the contents of 'the latest CIA report.'

Stories began to appear in the American press that this 'latest CIA report' charged that the Vietnamese were burning crops, laying mines in paddies, stealing food, even preventing planting and that the Soviet Union also was blocking food distribution. Editorialists trumpeted 'genocide', and liberal columnists atoned for their sins during the war and Watergate and printed, at times verbatim, that which Brzezinski's office fed them. It was as if the clock had spun back twenty years, and the Pentagon Papers had never happened. Of course, the CIA report was a fabrication. Indeed, it was not a report at all; it was warmed-over propaganda that rejected a genuine CIA analysis, whose author recently told a Washington-based Indochina research group, 'They misrepresented everything I wrote.'

Shortly after the 'report' was given to the press, I was asked by a Western foreign minister to give my observations of what I had seen in Cambodia. I told him that the only substantial relief my ATV team and I had seen was that coming from Vietnam, that we had followed a civilian convoy coming over the 'land bridge' from Saigon to its recipients among the Khmer population, that the only doctors we had seen were Vietnamese and that every Khmer we had spoken to spoke the obvious truth: that the Vietnamese had saved their lives.

'Yes, I know that', he said. 'But', I asked, 'Haven't you seen the CIA report?' 'Yes', he replied 'the State Department told us to ignore it, that it was only for the media.'

The 'diversion of aid', and 'Vietnamese atrocity' stories have been discredited by every journalist who has been to Cambodia, including those hostile to Vietnam, and by all relief officials. Dominic Dufour, chief of the Red Cross mission in Phnom Penh, told me, 'Apart from minor pilfering, the stories of misuse have come from outside as propaganda and are rubbish. Why should the Vietnamese give with one hand and take with the other?' Even Ambassador Abramovitz has been moved to say there was no proof that the Vietnamese were committing 'subtle genocide'. As for the Russians blocking aid, the State Department's current assessment shows the

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Soviet Union as the biggest single donor. But the momentum, or 'drip effect', of this type of propaganda, familiar to most foreign correspondents (and documented in a fine article by Philip Jacobson in last week's *Sunday Times*), had left its stain.

On 28 December last year Alistair Cooke, in his BBC *Letter from America*, spoke of 'a document that has been delivered into the hands of the President of the United States and one that made him *furious*'. Speaking of The President and The Document (the bogus CIA report) in his customary hallowed tones, Cooke accused the Vietnamese and the Russians of plotting to block 'great supplies and medicines that could save unaccountable lives in Cambodia.'

I mention Cooke's broadcast because it was delivered during the Christmas period when a great many people in this country were deeply concerned about Cambodia. Tens of thousands had given to Oxfam and other agencies; and many of them were those who could least afford to give. Every day for several months they had sent family allowances, life savings, holiday money, dole money and pocket money; the rescue of Cambodia had become something of a national cause in Britain, above and in spite of politics, especially among children; the Blue Peter appeal raised £3,500,000. No doubt some of these people heard Cooke's broadcast, and the lie he repeated would have dismayed them. He was one of many who did that. Never have I known so many pundits tending the same little garden of bigotry; Cambodia's suffering seemed to draw them out. That no reporter who went to Cambodia confirmed such pernicious rubbish says something about the nature of journalism.

I WENT BACK to Cambodia last month, accompanied by Jim Howard, who started Oxfam's operation, and two French doctors who were the only Western doctors in Cambodia when I was there last summer. I had asked them to return with me, believing that only those who had seen Cambodia's landscape of famine then could make a fair assessment now.

So great are the problems remaining in a society whose very fabric has unravelled, with no family I met grieving the death of fewer than six members, that the task of restoration would daunt the most advanced nation; and this is a peasant society, with its educated and skilled decimated. For example, last year the Ministry of Health consisted of a Minister, a deputy and an old Renault car with a flat battery and no tyres. Today this ministry, which has just five senior officials working from what was the old Volkswagen showrooms, is much criticised by foreign officials for its 'lack of efficiency'. Last August the hospital at Kompong Speu, which comes under the Ministry of Health, had no drugs, no bandages, no beds, no blankets. It was not a hospital at all; the Khmer Rouge, in their orgy of demolition and vandalism, had *erased* it in the almost ingenious way they had dismantled the Roman Catholic Cathedral in Phnom Penh, leaving not a stone.

After Battambang province, Kompong Speu was probably the most wasted, plundered and brutalised area of Cambodia. Last August, a lone Vietnamese doctor insisted on splashing Dettol on us; for there was cholera, plague and anthrax. Dr Jean-Michel Vinot, one of the French doctors who accompanied me, said:

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> 'It will be a pity if people in Britain do not realise how much their savings contributed to the rescue of Cambodia'

> I remember a whole ward of orphans died in one week; there was *nothing*. Now they have a functioning hospital, and a dispensary with a whole range of drugs. The most serious case I can find is a child with meningitis, and she will survive.

When we were last here, Dr Vinot estimated that eighty per cent of the women in Kompong Speu had lost their menstrual cycle, as a direct result of the trauma of life under a regime which — in forging together the outer reaches of Maoism with a barbaric and glorified medievalism — outlawed not only the family, but all sentiment and expressions of love and grief. Today the hospital has an overflowing maternity ward. 'The transformation and resilience', said Dr Vinot, 'is *incredible*'.

Ian Hopwood of UNICEF has calculated that 912,000 children are now in schools throughout Cambodia. 'Many of the 19,000 teachers have never taught before', he said, 'but the Government has introduced a two-month crash course and it appears to be working'. Last August, in Phnom Penh, Jim Howard found fifty sick and starving children in what had been converted to a pig pen. In ten months this place has been transformed into the largest primary school in the country, with desks, paper, pencils, toys, footballs: most of them paid for in Britain. In the playground, as in the pavement outside, as in towns all over the country, are palm trees planted by the Khmer Rouge, beneath which has been discovered human fertiliser. Here, the children, now in hot pursuit of a cheated childhood, use them as goalposts.

When we arrived in Phnom Penh last year, the city stood virtually as it had been abandoned, with rubbish tips inhabitated by little phantoms, mostly orphaned children, attempting to use worthless banknotes as fuel and to eat a gruel of roots and plants. I remember the presence of death, not of rotting corpses, but of something surreal and pervasive in the humidity and stillness; this had been a city whose population had swollen to more than two million and all of them had been marched, at gunpoint, into the countryside and perhaps half of them are now dead.

TODAY, PHNOM PENH has more than 100,000 people, traffic, shops, restaurants, weddings, two raucous markets, electricity, water (the waterworks restored with British money) a textile factory, a drugs factory, reopened pagodas, telephones, two bus routes, a jazz band, a football team and currency; the successful introduction of the *riel*, in April and May, is an achievement which all good monetarists surely must regard as remarkable.

Although we saw none of the starvation we saw last summer, which the Khmer now recall as 'the great months of death', we did see pockets of worrying malnutrition among children. In Battambang railway yards, very thin children swept rolling stock with their hands for rice seed. They have survived and they exude the kind of energy that seems resourceless, but I suspect it will take just one epidemic to decimate them. Bill Yates, Oxfam's chief in Phnom Penh, believes the Government has taken a gamble to stockpile and ration food, giving priority to seed distribution for the December harvest. He said:

> They have trusted in the peasants' natural instinct to live off the land, and everyone who needs to work and has no source of food, from nurses to bridge repairers, is receiving rations. All the villages I have seen have subsistence plots of maize corn, sugar cane and fruit, and I haven't seen a sow that isn't pregnant. I may be wrong, but I think the relief agencies may have been outguessed by the government?

Certainly, although food distribution is sporadic and dangerously uneven, the opposite is true of seed. Unannounced, we watched seed unloaded from the Oxfam consortium's twentieth barge in Phnom Penh, followed it to the railway yards, then drove 350 miles to Battambang to see it unloaded and trucked to warehouses. The next day an armada of ox carts, donkey traps and cycles delivered the entire consignment of 390 tons to villages. From barge to soil took just three days.

There are myriad frustrations, obdurate officials, 'political' interferences etc. etc; and so what, one might ask, is new? The government is not a monolithic 'regime', as it is often presented; it is a confusion of students, teachers and other surviving remnants of the old bourgeoisie, *anyone* with skills, over whom preside men who defected from the Khmer Rouge and who, after a spot of re-education in Hanoi, are now keeping their heads down. There are crash-course cadres whose bored audiences want nothing to do with *any* political evangelism; one lady emerged from a political lecture and remarked that the name of a 'Mr Marx Lenin' had come up, whoever he was. (For the Vietnamese, this is another irony for the album; the unique experience of their so-called clients bears no resemblance to their own, and by shoring up a re-emerging urban elite, as they must, they are inadvertently re-creating again the divisions that, with Kissinger's bombs, helped to spawn the Khmer Rouge.)

AFTER TRAVELLING with us, Jim Howard estimated that more than ninety per cent of the Oxfam consortium's relief had got through to 'end users'. Howard is probably one of the most experienced and respected 'disasters firemen', having been through India, Bangladesh and Biafra, and

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unlike some of the aid people in Phnom Penh, encamped in the old Hotel Royale, an Asian Wuthering Heights with stuffed crocodiles in the foyer and an atmosphere given to monastic claustrophobia, Howard sees problems from the point of view of *people*, and not from a Messianic complex, or a career. He said:

> I think it will be a pity if ordinary people in Britain, who supported a faraway nation with their hearts and their savings, do not realise how much they have contributed to the rescue of Cambodia.
>
> You see, for some of us in the relief business, the old colonialist fervour dies hard. How can the natives *possibly* have a government which might, just might, know its own people best? Their attitude is that the West knows best. The truth is that real corruption here has been negligible. *None* of the supplies are on sale in the market. The problem, which Westerners have difficulty with, is sensitivity. This is a government whose murderous enemy is still recognised by the United Nations and which rightly feels itself cut off and isolated fighting for its life. In the circumstances, I believe they have done an historic job of recovery.

Fear, not hunger, is Cambodia's burden now. It is a fear that threads through every conversation, that haunts every other face in every crowd. 'Will Pol Pot come back?' I was asked, time and again. In spite of the years of bombs and the West's backdoor support for Pol Pot, there seems little of the xenophobia toward Westerners that one would expect in a small nation that has suffered so much foreign vandalism. Traditional Khmer antipathy toward the Vietnamese has been shelved for the duration, and there is no manifest 'hatred' of which much has been made by those on the border. Vietnamese soldiers stroll through the markets, unarmed; their discipline is respected; people inside Cambodia know that only they stand between them and another Khmer Rouge regime.

The Monorom Hotel, where I stayed in Phnom Penh, arranged a 'disco night' recently. The girls and the children sat on one side of the room, palais style, and the men on the other. It was a lot of fun, until a cassette of the much-loved singer, Sin Sisamouth, was played, and people walked to the curtains and wept. He had been taken to Battambang, forced to dig his own grave and to sing the Khmer Rouge anthem, which is all about blood and death. Then he was beaten to death.

There is a unique train that carries seed from Phnom Penh to the north-west. On the return journey, every other day, it is a human ant heap with between five and ten thousand passengers slung in hammocks between the wheels, embracing the funnel, sardined in the driver's cabin. The station master, a sardonic man, who spoke to me his first English in five years (knowledge of a foreign language under Pol Pot meant death) explained that the train could not proceed right to the Phnom Penh central station 'because the driver is no good; he is learning, you see. He does not know when to put on the brake, and when it is raining cats and frogs he is even worse!'.

Two days later the train was ambushed by the Khmer Rouge with rockets and automatic weapons; at least 150 people were killed. When I told a Khmer friend that this had happened, her face became a mask, as if her feelings were incubated. It is a common expression and tears are rare.

She had been a radical student at Phnom Penh university when the Khmer Rouge marched silently into the city. 'With my comrades I went into the street to welcome them', she said.

> One year later they had killed my sister, who was pregnant, my six brothers, my mother, my father. Just before the liberation, I knew they were going to kill me, but I ran into the forest. On that morning two little boys were accused of stealing pigswill and we were brought out to watch them hanged. They were six or seven years old.

Readers may know of such horrors, and I am sorry to have to repeat them. But as the second Indochina war is fuelled, with the most populous nation and the most powerful nation supporting those who murdered many children, memories are fading almost as quickly as the killers' image is being refurbished. Khieu Samphan, who has replaced Pol Pot as 'Prime Minister' of 'Democratic Kampuchea', has received the international press at his bush headquarters, courtesy of the Thai military. *The Times* man in Bangkok, Neil Kelly, found him to be 'a youthful, sturdy man with a ready smile' who 'wished to clear away the past' and said that 'his government's future policy was to work for freedom for the people to choose a government of any ideology — Communist, capitalist or middle of the road'. *Ad nauseum.*

Such 'objective' interviews with a man who was the theoretician most responsible for the crimes against his people are not yet common; but they are emerging, as if what the Khmer Rouge did was a mere political 'problem', not the mammoth Nazi-like perversion it was. Dr Brzezinski's 'background' people already are passing the word that 'Democratic Kampuchea' will, of course, have to be part of a coalition, with or without Prince Sihanouk who has rather disturbed this vision by saying he wants nothing to do with the butchers of his people.

Britain's Foreign Office has followed dutifully along; the Minister of State, Peter Blaker, who gives the impression of having almost no knowledge of South East Asia, has said repeatedly that the Vietnamese are no better than the Khmer Rouge and that their 'puppets' in Phnom Penh control no national territory. Last year, the Foreign Office applied unsubtle pressure to voluntary relief agencies, warning them of 'grave difficulties' if they went ahead and sent relief to the Phnom Penh government; Oxfam, to its great credit, ignored this. The perfidious effect, if not the purpose, of Britain's 'de-recognition' of Pol Pot last December has been to quieten opposition to the policy of backdoor support for the Khmer Rouge; in May, the Foreign Office instructed Sir Henry Yellowless, the British delegate to the World Health Assembly, to vote *in favour* of the credentials of 'Democratic Kampuchea'.

Pol Pot's (or Khieu Samphan's) representative at the United Nations, who occupies a luxurious suite in the Beekman Tower hotel, has said there is no doubt that, with Washington's and Peking's backing, the General Assembly will vote in September in favour of the legitimacy of his 'government'. So the pieces are fitting together. China, having rejected a lunar new year peace, has moved three new divisions to its border with Vietnam, now in its thirty-fifth year of siege, and suffering. As Deer Hunter Rosenblatt would say, another 'humanitarian effort' is well under way.

John Pilger, the 1979 Journalist of the Year, is on the staff of the Daily Mirror.

WASTELAND

London's Derelict and Unused land

There are more than 20,000 acres of disused land in London. Some of it has been derelict since the First World War. WASTELAND is the result of an inquiry into the problems of London's derelict land, specially commissioned by Thames Television as part of the follow-up to its LONDON LOOKS FORWARD project of 1977.

The findings of the WASTELAND inquiry, which chose Tower Hamlets for detailed study, present a bleak picture. The present land-use system is breaking down, say the authors. We will need important changes in our planning structure before London can tackle the problem of derelict land.

WASTELAND is a Thames publication, available at larger booksellers or direct by post (cash with order post free) from Hammicks Bookshops, Newman Lane, Alton, Hants. Price £6.50.
ISBN 0 413 48020 8.

THAMES

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London Diary

☐On Monday afternoon Sir Geoffrey Howe pottered into House of Commons committee room 15 to be examined by the Treasury and Civil Service Committee. He seemed unready for the test. When Michael English asked him about the connection between money supply and Public Sector Borrowing Requirement, Howe dismissed the question as 'a semantic exercise'. English then asked about index-linked bonds, only to be told by the Chancellor that this was 'a piece of academic analysis for an afternoon out'. Undaunted, English questioned the justification of External Financing Limits for nationalised industries. At this, Howe lost patience: 'This is a good illustration of the way in which, on an afternoon of this kind, topic after topic can be *flung* on the table' — as if the system of financing nationalised industries was a matter which had not previously entered Howe's head. Howe then mumbled his way through most of the afternoon, while the Treasury advisers flanking him tried to look serious — a task which proved too much for one of them. John Bridgeman, an under-secretary in the domestic economy sector of the Treasury, is reckoned to be the brightest member of Howe's team, and throughout the meeting his face was set in a kind but despairing smile. The somnolent tone of the session was shattered at the very end when Richard Shepherd, the Conservative MP for Aldridge-Brownhills, asked about the effect on industry of the government's increase in gas prices. Howe gave the usual flannelling reply ('I'm not going to try and encapsulate an answer in a single sentence') but Shepherd was angry, and repeated his question. Howe said four times that Shepherd's inquiry was 'perfectly legitimate', but steadfastly refused to answer it. Furiouser and furiouser, Shepherd eventually had to be called to order by the chairman when he interrupted Howe to shout 'You're destroying job opportunities!' With Tories like this, who needs an Opposition?

☐The Queen Mother's 80th birthday next Monday will provide another opportunity for the preposterous forelock-tugging which accompanies any mention of her name. I venture to suggest that what we have witnessed in the past few weeks has been not a process of canonisation but full deification. What else can one conclude when the Archbishop of Canterbury declares 'Thank you, your Majesty — and thanks be to God', in that order? How else is one to interpret Runcie's remark that if we wish to see 'the inmost nature of God' we should look at the Queen Mum? I was pleased to see Polly Toynbee trying to break the consensus in Monday's *Guardian,* but I thought it rather disingenuous of her to mock the *Sun, Express, Times* and so on without mentioning the record of her own paper. I have before me a copy of the *Guardian* for 16 July (the day after the service in St Paul's) and it contains no fewer than 133 column inches — 11 column feet — of glowing pictures and devotional prose. Not a word about the Queen Mother's ability to have large tracts of London turned into no-go areas so that she can go to church. Nothing about her appetite for booze, nor about her treatment of her staff (which, I gather from sources close to the servants' quarters, leaves something to be desired). There's nothing wrong in enjoying a tipple, of course, but if the press are going to present us with a new God I think they have a duty to let us know what we're getting.

☐'The Market', the shop which is being persecuted by Islington Council because it breaks the Sunday trading laws, has conceded defeat. It had no choice. A month ago a special meeting of the council decided to continue legal action against the shop, and a fortnight ago the council was granted an injunction against the place under the Shops Act. While waiting for the case to be heard, The Market was scrupulously obedient to the law, which means that on Sundays most of the shop was fenced off and one could buy milk, fresh fruit and veg (no tins) and practically nothing else. From this weekend it will cease Sunday trading altogether (the smaller Highbury branch has already done so). This will probably cause a couple of redundancies, as did the Highbury closure, and it has also worried several other traders who open on Sundays: at least two local shopkeepers are thinking of leaving the area for fear that they are next on the council's hit list. The ruling group of councillors — who, when they manage to string two words together, are fond of blathering on about bringing jobs and prosperity to the area — seem to regard this development with equanimity. A council spokesman repeated to me the soiled excuse that The Market 'was a persistent offender' and said that Islington was, in any case, simply fulfilling its obligation to enforce the law. Robin Cook's success in changing the law on homosexuality in Scotland leads me to believe that modest victories are still possible; what is now required is a flood of letters and phone calls to MPs, urging them to support Clement Freud's bill on Sunday trading.

☐At the Oval on Saturday, where I spent a disagreeable few hours trying to shelter from the monsoon, I found myself within a yard of Joel Garner. Rumour had it that the *Tribune* side, which this paper was due to meet the following day, had secured the services of Freddie Titmus, and I tried to interest Big Bird in helping us. He had already arranged his amusements for Sunday, but my fears proved groundless: Titmus did not appear, and the Great Turnstile All Stars, even without Garner, and without our other fast bowler (B.Page), trounced the *Tribune* team for the second year running. Invidious to single out performances, I suppose, but it seems only fair to note a captain's contribution from P. Wintour, who took five wickets for nine runs and scored a match-winning 19 not out.

☐Tim Pat Coogan, editor of the *Irish Press,* caused a slight to-do this week with his claim that the IRA had vetted one of Merlyn Rees's speeches. Rees has yet to deny that Republican prisoners were shown an advance copy (he just says *he* never showed it to anyone); nor has he yet denied that the British government gave IRA prisoners £10,000 for 'welfare' as part of a list of concessions which included warders calling prisoners by their 'ranks' in the IRA. Coogan, who is in London this week, says that he hopes the row with Rees doesn't obscure the main point, which is that there will be deaths 'on the blanket' before long, with severe consequences for law and order outside the prisons. His book *On The Blanket* (Quartet £2.50) says, inter alia, that the 'dirty protest' began with *warders* throwing slops back into the cells (ex-warders have confirmed this). He also points out that in Southern prisons the IRA men are allowed to wear their own clothes and to associate with one another, though they have no 'special category' or 'political status' as such. So it ought to be possible for the British government to end the dirty protest without 'giving in to the gunmen'. The problem, as ever, is fear of Paisleyite and back-bench foamings.

☐Earlier this year I reported that the government of Ceylon had prosecuted S. Nadesan QC, a distinguished lawyer, for daring to write a newspaper article which criticised some Ceylonese MPs. I'm pleased to say that Nadesan was acquitted, but I'm afraid that the Ceylonese government seems to have acquired a taste for cases of this sort, whereby newspapers which are rude about MPs can be accused under the Parliament (Powers and Privileges) Act of 'defaming the character of the House'. The country's Attorney General has now decided to proceed with a case which has been lying dormant for two years, and the indictment makes strange reading: the editor of the Sinhalese newspaper *Aththa* is charged with writing an editorial containing 'several statements which, inter alia, directly and indirectly described members of the House as "bulls who bellow", "persons who did not have even an elementary knowledge of Parliamentary conventions" and "persons who did not possess general knowledge". The said editorial further directly and indirectly described Mr A.M.R.B. Attanayake, the member of National State Assembly for Ududumbara, as "a fool", "a bull" and "a donkey" and directly and indirectly described his aforesaid statements in the House as "a bellow", "a barking" and "a braying".' The case is due to start next week, unless the defence are successful in their application for a postponement, and we'll be keeping you posted.

Francis Wheen

This England

Prizes: £3 book token for first entry, £2 tokens for others printed. Paste entries on a postcard.

☐Defending the action of Granville Motors, of Hucknall, Notts, Mr Frank Hartwell, a director, said yesterday: 'The fire was nothing to do with us. There is a 'phone box outside our garage and he should have called the fire brigade. There are eight fire extinguishers around our premises, including one on the forecourt, but they are not the things you loan out to strangers who just happen to have a car on fire.' — *Daily Telegraph* (G. M. Moger)

☐The silence of the nurses' rest room at a Lancashire hospital was disturbed by the sound of breaking wind, which led, a Manchester industrial tribunal was told yesterday, to the dismissal of Mrs Rosemary Beacham, 35, a State Enrolled Nurse. — *Daily Telegraph* (G. Moor)

☐Mr David Miller, a miners' union official, of Knottingley, West Yorkshire, carries a kidney donor card bearing the words 'under no circumstances must they be given to a Tory over 16 years.' He said last night it was a stand against the government's spending cuts. — *The Times* (Ralph Simmonds)

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Publish and be damned

On 13 June we published David Caute's examination of the standard printed contracts used by many British publishers. We now return to the subject of the relationship between authors and their publishers not only in the letters printed below but also in articles on pages 19-21.

From J.C.A. Davey

Emerging crushed and despondent from David Caute's survey of the good publisher (Journeyman Press), the bad and the simply vicious, it did just occur to me to question whether his league table really is the best guide to the highest return for an author. OUP and Macmillan, for example, between whom we nestle unhappily in the double-figure negatives, have marketing organisations that span the world. Cape, almost lowest of the general publishers listed, devote considerable and highly effective attention to promotion. Duckworth are known for their high standards of design and production. Routledge, whose league position one daren't contemplate, advertise, as NS readers must have noticed, a lot. Marketing, promotion and design do reduce the proportion of income that publishers can reasonably pay to their authors and remain in business but I suspect that few authors would see it in their interests, financial or otherwise, to do without them.

The fact that I can find no-one who has heard of Journeyman Press, let alone seen their advertisements, doesn't *seem* to indicate that they very frequently sell 5,000 copies of their hardbacks after which the 15 per cent royalty the Writers' Guild have just negotiated comes into operation. I'm sorry if I'm wrong of course.

Basil Blackwell, 5 Alfred Street, Oxford

From Peter Owen

Further to your article, it has not been pointed out to your readers that publishers and authors are involved in the most difficult publishing situation that has ever occurred. Any publishers offering unrealistically high advances or being over-generous on authors' corrections or sharing out of subsidiary rights should, at this time, be financially suspect. This is particularly applicable to unknown or lesser known authors whose sales are likely to be minimal although the publisher's outlay in cash and skilled work is in the same proportion as that given to a book which will sell large quantities.

In the past two years many publishers have ceased trading, as a result either of bankruptcy or of complete integration into conglomerates. Some of the giants are currently reeling. Your readers must decide whether it is better to be published by a financially sound firm and be paid smaller sums regularly or to receive terms that may turn out to be mythical.

Peter Owen Ltd., 73 Kenway Road, London SW 5

From Carmen Callil

I read David Caute's article with growing incredulity — and disappointment. What a wasted opportunity! I could go on at length to list the inaccuracies which relate to our contract (five in all) or to analyse and dispute his interpretation of about 15 of the 25 clauses he interprets.

Instead though, I accuse him of absolutely unnecessary hostility towards publishing *per se*. The words he uses to explain each clause are supercilious and ignorant; he assumes that each champagne-sipping publisher is in receipt of a perfect, exquisitely written, libel-free manuscript for which the only work involved is its gradual and inefficient transfer to a printer and bookshop; in receipt too of an interest-free, bottomless pit of money without a bank manager in sight. He creates an ogre who has no interest in writers and their work; he completely ignores the enormous amount of time, energy, care and indeed love which publishers put into the books they publish.

His greatest sin is absolute ignorance of publishing as a business. Until authors understand that, they are in no position to bargain, and bargain they must because they have been and frequently still are badly and dishonestly treated. For wasted opportunity, I sentence David Caute to spend six months in a publisher's office — preferably ours because it's small and he will learn everything. The hours are long and the pay will not be what he's earning at the moment, but he'll learn to love the job. 'Beset by anxiety' — just like a writer — he'll find out enough to do properly what he has attempted in this article.

Virago, 4th floor, 5 Wardour Street, London W 1

Alternatives to doomsday?

From R.R. Pearce

What William Rodgers does not expose (NS 18 July) is the catastrophically dangerous confidence trick which Defence Secretary Pym is perpetrating on this country. Consider the military logic of the matter — which will never be clarified by government: this country can be destroyed from a distance, but conquered only on land. Cruise Missiles, being programmed to hit fixed targets, could defend it from neither. On the other hand, their enormous destructive potential would make a target well worth while for a pre-emptive blanket attack.

Pym & Co claim that the Cruise Missile is a deterrent weapon, basing this claim on the assumption that a Russian missile would take eight minutes from launch to landing, allowing for Cruise Missiles to be launched in counter-attack. But in fact neither side believes this; if Pym does believe it, why disperse the missiles? If they were all kept on their bases they would be more secure, more easily maintained and more quickly launched, with the bonus that only the bases and not the whole country would become the prime target.

Moreover, were the Cruise Missiles truly deterrent, there would be no need for Trident nor, indeed, for Polaris. At present, Polaris is a credible deterrent to attack on obsolescent bombers, but it would be totally inadequate to deter a pre-emptive strike against 160 Cruise Missiles. Therefore, Trident. We must have an enormously expensive armament ourselves to deter attack on the American-controlled Cruise Missiles.

There is constant happy talk about the 'American umbrella'. There is no such thing; no Soviet generals will believe — and what they believe is what matters — that, if Britain or Western Europe were destroyed, the US would launch its missiles at Russia to avenge us, thereby bringing about their own destruction.

There is great profit, military and industrial, to the US in making Britain a nuclear arsenal. We shall be a valuable but expendable outpost to Fortress America in the fight against the Soviet scheme for world domination. We must all be loyal in that fight, mustn't we? The snag is that, accepting the basic assumption, the Soviets are now warned to over-run Europe in the three years before the Cruise Missiles arrive; and if they are so foolish as to miss that opportunity, they will still have ten years before Trident is deployed.

Of course the Establishment doesn't really believe in this tale of world domination. And, of course, if we had no nuclear weapons, there would be far less danger of nuclear attack than there will be once Cruise Missiles are deployed.

Capel Grove, Capel St Mary, Ipswich

Power point

From Robert Wistrich

Marion Woolfson's letter (NS 18 July) sets up a smokescreen of false trails designed to mislead the unsuspecting reader. Anyone who cares to examine closely her page references will find ample confirmation of my basic criticisms — that she glosses over the impact of Nazism on the Arab world and fails to analyse the ways in which modern Arab nationalism undermined the position of all non-Arab and non-Muslim minorities in the region.

As to her description of my pamphlet *The Myth of Zionist Racism* as an 'anti Arab diatribe' (it concludes in fact with an unequivocal call for Jewish-Palestinian reconciliation), this is nothing but a cheap smear. There is nothing 'anti-Arab' about pointing to the historic oppression of the *dhimmi* peoples in the Arab world. Also according to Ms Woolfson, Albert Memmi has been 'totally discredited in Israel'. I did not mention Mr Memmi in my review and in any case her assertion is pure fantasy. He is a distinguished novelist and chronicler of North African Jewry, a socialist, a resolute anti-colonialist who fought for Arab independence in North Africa *and* a believer in Zionism as a movement of de-colonisation in the Middle Eastern context that directly affected Oriental Jews.

Institute of Contemporary History and Wiener Library, 4 Devonshire Street, London W 1

War on claimants

From Jane V. Doull

In view of Judith Cook's findings on DHSS 'fraud' prosecutions in Birmingham (NS 2 May), I can confirm that the DHSS is prosecuting 'fraud' on a similar scale in Oxford and the magistrates are co-operating, imposing custodial sentences of one or two months merely for failure to report change of address; trivial amounts were involved, extenuating circumstances abundant and in at least two cases the change of address had been notified before charges were brought.

The Oxford NCCL and the Oxford Claimants Union feel very strongly about the unwarranted social and economic costs of such severity. We should be very grateful for anything anyone can tell us about DHSS and court policy and procedure with regard to 'fraud' cases elsewhere; we also wonder to what extent and why people are pleading guilty to such offences. We hope to compare these proceedings with prosecutions and penalties for tax evasion and deception and should very much appreciate finding useful information on the latter.

13 Norham Road, Oxford

Canada's example

From Professor Robert Martin

Christopher Hitchens said some wonderful things about Pierre Trudeau (NS 13 June). He praised the Canadian government for its policies on nuclear weapons. In particular, he made the following observation: 'The export of fissionable material is subjected to a whole battery of controls and regulations; many of which go beyond the usual fiction of international safeguards . . .' Hitchens implies that Canadian policy derives largely or entirely from moral precepts and that this policy has been adhered to 'even at the cost of some commercial sacrifice'.

The main evidence which Hitchens cites for all this is a speech which Pierre Trudeau gave at the UN in May 1978. Canadian practice today utterly contradicts the lofty objectives Trudeau propounded two years ago. Canada has recently agreed to complete work on a nuclear reactor it had been building in Argentina, despite the refusal of the Argentinian government to sign the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. Previous demands that Argentina do so had led to Canada losing a contract to supply a second reactor. Argentina ranks among the half-dozen most vile countries in the world. Its nuclear programme continues to rely on the services of a number of ex-Nazis. The Argentinian government has for long been candid about its wish and intention to build nuclear weapons. The government of Canada, led by Pierre Trudeau, is making it possible for Argentina to become a nuclear power. And, I must add, the Canadian government is perfectly clear about what it is doing.

Faculty of Law, University of Western Ontario, London, Canada N6A 3K7

Information wanted

Hector Hugh Munro ('Saki'): letters by Saki or information about W.R. Spikesman or Cyril Winterscale. *A.J. Langguth, c/o Hamish Hamilton, 57-59 Long Acre, London WC2.*

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FIRST PERSON
Arthur Marshall

Up to date

I like, in my simple and unpretentious way, to try to keep abreast of the times in which we live and for some months now I have been struggling to refer to 'the radio' rather than 'the wireless' when remarking on some pleasing aural item that has come my way ('I heard it on the radio'). I understand, however, that I must no longer speak of the actual apparatus itself as 'a radio' but as 'a transistor' if I want to be really in the swim and to be the admiration of all for my up-to-the-minute chat. There is, I believe, in this connection something called 'a music centre', which at first I naturally thought to be either the Albert Hall or the spacious premises of Messrs Boosey and Hawkes (such an odd name when you come to look at it) but it seems I was wrong. However, one mustn't try to run before one can walk and I have decided to leave 'music centres' ('I heard it at my music centre') for a later date and when I have been able to devote proper time and study to the subject rather than risk a *faux pas*. I suspect that I shall find myself in a scientific and advanced world of musical reproduction where my dear old gramophone (which works on electricity and was purchased in 1952) and my adored stock of 78s (José Collins singing 'Oh for a night in Bohemia, frolic and feast and fun. All in the whirl of the revel, dignity goes to the devil') would cause raised eyebrows and facetious comment. A dignified silence would be my only riposte.

It was, as you'll remember, in the Albert Hall and during the Chelsea Arts Ball of 1953 that Bob finally proposed to Jenny and for those with rusty memories, let me help you (and here I was, at the time and for once, as up to date as it was possible to be). The Bob in question was Bob Dale, son of Dr and Mrs Dale and a prominent personality in *Mrs Dale's Diary,* an enthralling wireless programme which began in 1948 and which had no more devoted listener than I. The diary was dispensed in dramatic form and in quarter-of-an-hour snippets round about tea-time and was centred on Virginia Lodge, Laurel Road, in the London suburb of Parkwood Hill, where the good doctor had his flourishing practice. Heavens, how one lived and suffered with the Dales, sharing the warp and woof of the medical profession, the little triumphs and disasters of their domestic life and the varied doings of the vast Dale family. There was so much to admire and to interest — Mrs Dale's mother's cat, Captain (it had huge feet, was fearfully greedy and eventually passed across, aged goodness knows what, behind the potting-shed), the Dales' dog, Bo'sun (who bit Mr Elliott in the surgery), and Mrs Dale's rather dashing sister, Sally, who addressed everybody as 'angel' or 'darling' and ran a smart hat shop called 'Stephanie'. And one was encouraged to shriek at comic servants like Mrs Morgan and Fickling and the Dales' semi-deaf gardener (was his name Monument?) and thrill to the excitement of Mrs Dale's unexpected foreign legacy (the Villa Bianca, near Naples) and meeting Dr Dale's black sheep brother, Alec (shifty eyes and fresh from a spell in jug).

I would not wish, either in the following matter or in another to which I shall shortly be coming, to tread on the toes of my wholly admirable and revered colleague, Julian Barnes, but, with the Dales long since dead and gone and feeling a need to involve myself, in my friendly manner, with another set of characters, I hit on, and heaven bless the day I did, the ATV programme, *Crossroads*. Although the ITV authorities have cruelly reduced the weekly showings from four to three, this wide panorama of motel life,where one misses absolutely nothing, from the *potage du jour* being constructed in the spacious kitchens to the really violent emotional lives of those who work in, of all places, the motel garage (it has already witnessed one murder), has much to hold and fascinate. Above all, the motel management — Mr Hunter and Meg Mortimer, together with her grown-up children, Sandy and Jill — are all tremendously wholesome. It is true that Jill did go through a spell when she became unwholesome (she had a baby by somebody other than her husband, Stan, and you may well click your tongue in dismay) but she is over all that now and is once more just as wholesome as wholesome can be.

Much of the action takes place, as viewers will know, in the motel Reception Area and here the motel staff seems sometimes heavily to outnumber the motel guests, but I keep telling myself that the latter are all in their chalets, freshening themselves up for the *potage du jour*. Although here in Devon our Appleton garage has not yet seen, as far as I know, a murder, one can, so wholesome are we, readily identify, according to sex, with either Mr Hunter or Meg, and so it was in a spirit of cheerful and confident enquiry that I approached another TV treat of which much has recently been written. I refer, of course, to *Dallas*. Somebody was, or wasn't, going to shoot 'JR', whoever he might be.

In my busy life, two of the daily showings of *Dallas* have been all that I have so far been able to manage but they have been a real eye-opener to life in a Texan millionaire belt and I have been trying to find some points of comparison between life as lived by the Ewing family and our own sedate existence here in Devon. It is a fact that my friends the Bultitudes' delightful residence compares well, as regards its commodious nature and its *de luxe* furnishings and appointments, with the Ewing home, but there the similarities end. The latter seems to be situated in a flat and open plain over which gales howl (everybody's hair, when I viewed, was blowing into their faces and partly obscuring their woebegone expressions), and much of the action took place in and around the pool and on those basketwork *chaises lounges* that are expensive and leave chequered patterns on your behind. Here the Ewings and their relations-by-marriage scowl at each other with what some novelists refer to as 'smouldering eyes', except for the dear little granddaughter, Lucy, who is often to be found in the hay-loft with the lustful hired hand (remember poor Jud in *Oklahoma*?), though she too smoulders when present. Her abandoned (in the sense of being deserted) mother, who works in a local cafeteria, doesn't smoulder and neither does Mrs Ewing senior. They both cry instead. Everybody else smoulders and nobody smoulders more than J. R. Ewing. Occasionally the men all stop smouldering in order to feast their eyes on a shapely female Ewing as she floats, bulging chest uppermost, in a skimpy pink swimsuit in the pool. Then they all take a manly pull on their mint juleps, or whatever, and start right in to smoulder all over again. Occasionally a distant, dusty cloud on the road warns that a furious outsider is going to come driving tipsily up and smoulder at the Ewings over some shady oil deal in the past. And what do the Ewings do? Why, man, they smoulder right back at him. Not in any sense a fun family.

Nobody in Appleton smoulders. As to the rest, it is true that during one of the Bultitudes' many happy summer garden parties I have seen Miss Entwhistle, locally considered to be, despite her age, the *dernier cri* in fashionable attire, floating, chest uppermost, in the pool and in what I can only think to have been a bikini, but nobody took any notice of her and the conversation about the unexpectedly and gratifyingly large amount of money taken at the church Fête went on undisturbed. The Bultitudes certainly have a hired hand (Jim) and a hay-loft, but there is nothing in it at the moment except hay.

Smouldering, as I say, we cannot offer. What, exactly, occurs in the garage of our treasured hostelry I have never been able to discover (and not for want of enquiry). Still, drama may be the more intense because of its restraint, and it is reasonable to ask why the electronic media do not see *Appleton!* as a natural addition to their repertoire. Life is negotiation, and I feel sure than neither the Bultitudes (nor indeed any of us) would be inflexible if it were suggested that the emotional temperature of our lives might require a slight upward adjustment. It might be, as perhaps it was for the people in *Crossroads*, just the excuse for which we have been looking.

Roger Woddis

To a winner

Too bad, too bad you've done so well,
You've made things even more confusing.
Hip, hip, two rousers — and a boo.
What's in a medal? Better losing.

A pity that you went at all,
Gaining the first place was the end.
Surging down the final straight
Had critics going round the bend.

Your arms in triumph held aloft,
A record smashed to smithereens —
Yet sport is merely politics
Continued by some other means.

While heart and mind and bursting lungs
Resolved the clash of rival wills,
Our thoughts (as they have always done)
Turned to the tribesmen in the hills.

A propaganda exercise
Envenoms this Olympiad:
Distortion, lies and doctored news —
But aren't the Russians just as bad?

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

Grub Street Revisited

David Caute's article 'Publish and Be Damned' aroused much interest. The following three articles deal with related issues.

MICHAEL SISSONS replies on behalf of literary agents.

DAVID CAUTE has done everyone in book publishing a service by his analysis of publishers' contracts. The evidence lays bare the risks that inexperienced authors run if they accept the virgin prose of publishers' contracts. In my trade, each year produces its quota of horror stories — and David Caute draws attention not only to numerous individual instances of unfair practice, but more importantly to a distressing consensus of penal provisions.

The results are not unfairly interpreted, in respect of contractual detail — although new authors should surely not conclude that the overall quality and performance of publishers can be judged by their contracts alone. At least four publishers of substance, Cambridge University Press, Dent, Hamlyn, and Granada, have escaped his clutches, and of these CUP has had a very unappealing contract, including the abrogation of copyright. (It is fair to say that half a dozen tiny, indeed virtually unknown, firms are included, and two of these are presented as signatories of the Writers' Guild Minimum Terms Agreement.)

Every working or would-be author, whether fighting his own battles or protected by the Society of Authors, the Guild, an agent, a lawyer, an accountant, or any combination thereof, should clip this report, and, whatever advice anyone gives authors in future, it cannot but be improved by the work the *New Statesman* has done.

ONE OF David Caute's aims is to give substance to the Writers' Guild argument for a Minimum Terms Agreement, and there are three main buttresses to this. First, it points to a state of 'anarchy', and thus the need for a revolutionary solution. I would demur at the word anarchy, because although it is important for *all* authors to have proper contractual protection vis-à-vis their publishers, and indeed in all their contractual relations with the media, there are far more constraints these days on publishers' behaviour than a simple study of their printed contracts will show. My concern is how protection can be best achieved.

The two other arguments concern my trade. Last September in the *New Statesman* David Caute pilloried authors' agents for not supporting the Guild version of the Minimum Terms Agreement. I was surprised to read that we had reacted 'with conservative hostility' to 'an intrusion on our own turf'. It was rightly suggested that agents believed 'that the interests of authors are best served by absolute flexibility of bargaining (otherwise known as horse-trading)'. But no evidence supported the assertion that

> one need only compare the Guild's clauses with many of the contracts negotiated by certain agents to discover where absolute flexibility may lead.

THE Association of Authors' Agents remains highly sceptical that the Guild agreement in its original form will achieve its objective — and if it were now to be amended we might be forgiven for that. David Caute now suggests both that agents are only significant in respect of 'successful authors' and that 'agents are still manoeuvring within the general Zeitgeist imposed by publishers'. Let me put both suggestions in perspective.

First, although the Guild, to its credit, generates much more energy and effect than is reflected simply by its numerical strength, the number of book writers who are members of the Guild is, as I understand it, about the same as one medium-sized writers' agency. Membership of the Society of Authors is around 3,000. There are 35 to 40 credible authors' agencies in London, representing well over 5,000 authors.

Thus a very large number of working authors do have professional protection. And it is simply not true that agents are only interested in successful and established authors: I know of no agency that isn't open for business to new authors. It's a matter on both sides of the chemistry working, and no doubt many would-be authors have a justified sense of bitterness that agents as well as publishers have turned them down. But a competent writer has a far better chance of finding an agent than was the case ten years ago.

As to the publishers' 'Zeitgeist': most agents now impose their own contracts on publishers, implicit in which is the position that authors lease to publishers limited aspects of their copyright. For years agents, individually and collectively, have fought the detailed contractual battles which authors' bodies are now taking up.

This isn't meant to be the crude plug that I'm afraid it may seem, but I don't accept as a valid premise for the Guild argument the idea that the vast majority of working writers are adrift. We offer whatever pragmatic help is acceptable to supplement, if necessary, the detailed advice on professional subjects offered by the Guild and by the Society of Authors.

THE THIRD argument for the Guild agreement points to the precedents in television and radio, and is to be taken seriously. But the Guild's strength in these fields derives from a time when the BBC had a monopoly in both — developing during a period when commercial television and radio have provided a measure of competition but still offer the writer much more limited possibilities than publishing, where a diverse, individualistic, even eccentric range of houses compete for books. So the analogy with TV and radio is inexact, because there are far more difficulties in defining a satisfactory minimum terms agreement in publishing.

So far the Guild's attachment to a Minimum Terms Agreement has not been successful. Only one publishing house of consequence, Hamish Hamilton, has signed it in two years, and their compliance can without cynicism be seen as having less to do with its merits than with the fact that several of Hamilton's most distinguished authors were senior members of the Guild when Hamilton were offered it. Indeed, as the report shows, Hamilton still almost always use their own contract.

Until recently the Guild maintained that only the collective intransigence of publishers stood in the way of the agreement, but the Guild would be wise to stand back from it now and consider whether it is as good a piece of drafting as it should be. I know that the agency contract for which I am responsible is a better contract for authors, both in detail and in general, because it is a more flexible and realistic document.

What is needed from the authors' bodies is a tough but pragmatic document providing authors with essential safeguards, rather than a political gesture based on confrontation which can only exacerbate the worries of the many authors concerned — whether rationally or not — over the eventual possibility of a closed shop in publishing.

I AM NOT hostile to a Minimum Terms Agreement as such, if it is genuinely of use to authors. But so far I find the case not proven, as I don't understand at what precise mixture of clauses, terms, and conditions one set of provisions becomes sacrosanct and non-negotiable. And it must be remembered that this debate is set against a background of real crisis in publishing, and particularly in the areas of general publishing of creative writing with which I fancy the Guild is rightly preoccupied.

I would not enjoy writing as follows:

> Dear Mr. Smith,
> *First the good news. After ten rejections I have* sold your excellent first novel to Snipcock & Tweed, who, pleading poverty in these hard times, offer a modest advance of £500. Now the bad news. Excellent publishers as they are, they won't accept our Minimum Terms Agreement as at present phrased, so your novel won't be published.

I would be doing my authors a disservice if I took that dogmatic a view of our contract, which in a sense is a Minimum Terms Agreement, give or take different amendments with

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different publishers. But the Guild dismisses without argument the main objection to terms which seek to treat all books as cakes of soap rather than what they are, unique and original in each case.

I am quite certain that if an unrealistic document is insisted on, a large number of worthy books will not be published at all. If we were dealing with a state publishing collective, then a minimum agreement would presumably be negotiated, simply if at all.

But, particularly when publishers are contracting their lists and looking for excuses not to publish books to which the gruesome adjective 'marginal' applies, authors will be poorly served if pegged to terms which are incapable of reflecting the individual character, size, and resources of publishers as well as the individuality of books and authors.

Over a wide range of conditions in any publishing contract it should not be difficult to find good, tough, standard clauses to protect authors: delivery of manuscripts, copyright, rejection or revision of manuscripts, etc., and in these and similar clauses some excellent ideas are put forward by the Guild — including some which agents should consider closely. (The report misses two very important targets: book club royalties and royalties on remainders, where new trade practices which are of crucial importance to authors demand the utmost wariness.)

BUT AS SOON as a Minimum Terms Agreement seeks to be all things to all persons in respect of the financial terms, then it is in trouble. As I have indicated, it would cause fewer books, not more, to be published, but more important it is both absurd and naive to suggest that the provisions for a first novel should be the same as for a secondary level textbook, that those for a major biography should be the same as for a full colour book on cats, or those for a tale for the under-sixes the same as for a cookbook. Perhaps it should rather be a Basic Rights Agreement.

I hope that these thoughts will be taken by David Caute and his fellow writers as a constructive contribution to a continuing dialogue rather than a declaration of ideological war. We work with both authors' bodies on an increasing variety of topics, and feel that with our specific professional duty to our authors goes a general duty to offer support to their profession. But it would be ironic indeed if, now that for the first time writers have to adjust to belonging to unions, the first practical proposal reflecting that fact involved a denial of their individual skills and creativity.

Tim Jeal

Fair Deal?

Publishing Agreements: A Book of Precedents
edited by Charles Clark *Allen & Unwin* £8.50

The next decade is likely to be a testing time for British publishers; squeezed by falling profit margins, they will also have to face the rising, if belated, awareness among authors that they have hitherto been contractually dominated by the stronger, more businesslike party, the publishers. Already this realisation has led to greater militancy from the Writers' Guild and the Society of Authors. Although Mr Clark would claim that his book is not meant as a response to this double challenge, but simply as an impartial guide to current practice, it nevertheless plainly favours the status quo. And, because Mr Clark is not only managing director of Hutchinson's, but also a past chairman of the Publishers' Association's Copyright Committee, and the present chairman of the Book Marketing Council, his book may well be taken as a guide by his colleagues when pressed by authors to justify or change current procedures.

Symptomatic of Mr Clark's dignified method is his insistence on calling his 12 chapters 'precedents' — seeming to claim for publishing close and honourable kinship with the Law of England itself. Each chapter/precedent contains a specimen publishing agreement (considered typical of those usually employed by publishers in various fields), accompanied by notes and comments on the separate clauses. Mr Clark frequently includes in his prototype agreements some of the most retrograde clauses in current use, amended in his notes only to a marginal degree. Mr Clark's treatment of the option clause is a striking example. Authors particularly resent certain stipulations under this clause: (a) more than one work taken under option; (b) having to offer the publisher the same rights in the next book, regardless of his performance in selling rights in the present book; (c) if no new terms are agreed, being unable to accept 'less favourable' terms elsewhere, though the author may feel his last book was badly sold and produced; (d) having to wait until a number of months after publication of the present work before the publisher is obliged to exercise his option on the next, and therefore possibly having to exist for a year or so without being able to sell a new outline, synopsis or finished book.

Although Mr Clark includes all four of these most deeply resented requirements in his specimen clause, he makes no adverse comment on any in his notes, except magnanimously to suggest that if the publisher has a two-book option and refuses the first optioned work, the author should not be bound to offer him the second. But why could he not have noted that two book options are considered oppressively feudal by authors, even with this elementary safeguard written in?

In more general areas of dispute, like the relative share which author and publisher receive from subsidiary rights, Mr Clark is equally disinclined to acknowledge the existence of conflicts of interest, although he does feel obliged to try to justify the large slice publishers currently take.

> By the mere fact of contracting to publish a book, and apart from their (publishers') services in its promotion and marketing all over the world, (publishers) increase the value of these rights, or may even bring them into existence.

A forceful argument, and, as Mr Clark rightly says, publishers *should* be entitled to 'a fair percentage' on a number of these rights. But is it 'fair' for example that the hardback publisher should usually expect to take 50 per cent of book club and paperback rights, when his own sales will generally only be worth a fraction of the combined income from these 'subsidiary' editions? In a book written for authors and agents, as well as for publishers, it is strange that Mr Clark should omit any mention of the royalty rates and splits considered reasonable by the Writers' Guild and the Society of Authors (the Guild gets three mentions, the Society one in 180 pages).

Since it is now no secret that the terms offered by publishers, in their standard printed agreements, differ by extraordinarily wide margins, Mr Clark's confident definition of 'normal' terms gives a most misleading impression of a well-ordered and unified system. At times he is not even consistent with his own 'typical' figures. The 6½ per cent he gives as an example of a normal starting rate for paperback royalties on page 10, is not the same as the 7½ per cent he quotes as typical on page 40. Mr Clark might helpfully have mentioned that publishers accept less than 50 per cent of sub-licensed paperback income where the paperback royalty starts at 10 per cent or more (as is not uncommon). Hamish Hamilton, under their agreement with the Writers' Guild, pay the author 60 per cent on the first £5,000 earned, and 70 per cent thereafter. Astonishingly Mr Clark makes no mention of the signing of this important agreement.

Mr Clark often pinpoints normal terms within far too narrow limits, finding norms where none exist. Take dramatisation rights — because these are not 'book' rights, the author's share is large — 90 per cent is usual, says Mr Clark. But Hutchinson's, of which group Mr Clark is managing director, offers 75 per cent to the author in their standard printed agreement, and the span offered by many well-known publishers on these rights in their standard agreements, ranges from 50 to 100 per cent. For translation rights, Mr Clark plumps for a norm of between 85 and 75 per cent to the author. In fact around 20 leading publishers offer basic terms between 70 and 50 per cent. Because of such discrepancies, the Writers' Guild has designed a Minimum Terms Agreement. It is significant that where Mr Clark mentions this agreement, he does not explain that it seeks to establish an agreed code of practice between the Guild and publishers, and is therefore much more than an advice sheet to individual authors. Can it really be ultimately in the interests of either party that small reprints, for example, can be set at anything between 1,000 to 4,000 copies? Of course authors detest such a clause, and suspect publishers' motives, since it can be used perpetually to postpone payment of higher royalties.

On late delivery of the typescript, the clause Mr Clark chooses as typical states that if the delay is over 21 days, the advance should be returned and the agreement terminated 'subject to the proviso that the author shall not be at liberty to publish the work elsewhere, without first offering it to the publishers on the terms of this agreement'. Elsewhere, Mr Clark explains the reasons for the Writers' Guild's implacable opposition to the return of any part of advances, but he does not remark upon the illogicality of a clause terminating the agreement in one breath, and, in the next demanding that the author should offer back the book on the same terms when it is finished The double standard whereby publisher pledge to publish 'within a reasonable time of delivery' (a meaningless formula), but insis that the author deliver by a fixed date, is one that Mr Clark sees no reason to change.

The note on Public Lending Right is fact

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ually incorrect 'The regulations for the management of PLR,' Mr Clark writes, 'allow the author to licence his/her publisher to handle the right on his/her behalf. Some authors may wish their publishers . . . to share in this way in the income from PLR.' There are no regulations for the management of PLR. The procedure for registration will be detailed in the scheme to be placed before Parliament, probably late in 1980. The Act permits an author to assign his PLR wholesale to anyone, including his publisher, but there is no mechanism for a second party to collect on behalf of the author, nor are publishers mentioned in it. Lord Donaldson, the then Minister for the Arts, said in the Lords on 27 April 1976: 'I am sure that publishers will recognise, along with everyone else, that the public lending right is being established at public expense for the benefit of authors alone.'

On the length of the hardback publisher's licence, Mr Clark for once puts his finger on an inconsistency with far reaching implications. The normal length of the hardback licence is for the duration of copyright (50 years after the author's death), but as Mr Clark explains, because hardback publishers limit the length of the sub-licences they grant, 'they can hardly be surprised that the issue has been raised in relation to their own licences'. Since authors are not at present signatories to subsidiary rights agreements, they will be interested to learn from Mr Clark's specimens, that the hardback publisher often grants licences on terms that they would dearly like to grant their own initial licence to him (at any rate in respect of speed of payment, termination of the agreement, length of licence etc).

Mr Clark's typical agreements, though often conservative, do give an idea of current procedures — and one which an unadventurous publisher may find reassuring. But for authors and their agents, the largely uncritical tone of the notes, and the silence on many matters which to them are vital, can serve only to remind them of their unequal relationship, and of the difficulties they continue to face.

Nigel Cross

Beautiful Mission

The Author and His Publisher by SIEGFRIED UNSELD *Chicago* £7.50

Siegfried Unseld is head of the German publishing house Suhrkamp Verlag which has the good fortune to publish Rilke, Hesse and Brecht. He is also a literary historian. Drawing from the firm's archives and on his own experience in post-war German publishing, Unseld has written a balanced though heartfelt account of the relationship between author and publisher. His first chapter *The Responsibilities of a Literary Publisher* should be required reading for everyone from editorial assistant to managing editor. Not since Geoffrey Faber wrote *A Publisher Speaking* has an eminent publisher been quite so ardent in his defence of literary excellence.

Unseld's recipe for durable success is to remain aloof from the race for today's best-sellers (which he correctly notes are tomorrow's casualties) and to concentrate on creating a high quality list of authors whose reputations can stand up to literary history. To achieve this pre-eminence 'the literary publisher who is serious about his responsibilities will never, not even in hard times, stop publishing the latest literature, no matter how difficult it is to find buyers and readers for it'.

Unseld is a traditionalist in that he mistrusts the new style of prepackaged publishing, but he is also a radical, who sincerely believes that a publisher should be an agent for change. He quotes approvingly from the founder of his firm, Samuel Fischer who said: 'The publisher's most important and beautiful mission is to force upon the public new values it doesn't want.' To do this successfully a publisher has to reconcile his ideals with sound business sense. The reward for supporting 'difficult literature' will be at least 50 copyright years of bestselling authors like Hesse and Brecht, Joyce and Eliot.

Once the author is signed up, how to keep him sweet? Unseld, who has a refreshing sense of awe in the presence of the creative artist, believes that the publisher must be friend, mentor, patron and psychoanalyst in one. He sees the great author as a child of genius, emotionally fragile and financially anxious: the publisher must play the sympathetic parent and hand out princely sums of pocket money *regularly*. He illustrates this relationship by four case-studies from his own firm — Hesse, Rilke, Brecht and Robert Walser.

Hermann Hesse was particularly skilful in negotiating contracts to his advantage. He joined Fischer's list in 1904 with the publication of *Peter Camenzind*. Although Fischer was sceptical about the novel's commercial prospects, Hesse secured 20% royalties for the soft-covered edition. By 1908 *Peter Camenzind* had sold 50,000 copies; Hesse asked Fischer for a salary of 1800 marks a year, exclusive of royalties, in return for the option on his future work. Fischer agreed to this exceptional arrangement and, in consequence, kept Hesse on his list in the face of fierce competition from other publishers. Hugo Ball has suggested that Hesse's commitment to Fischer was vital for his development as a novelist. Hesse gave ample proof of this commitment when he deferred the payment of his royalties to give Suhrkamp Verlag the finance it needed to reestablish itself after the second world war.

Like Hesse, Rilke required 'adequate monetary compensation' for his labours. At first he accepted a 'profit-sharing' contract, but by 1908 there were no profits and he was so poor he had to give up drinking tea. In desperation he wrote to his publisher, Anton Kippenberg, to request a salary: 'I now wish with all due care to secure for myself a period for intensive work.' Kippenberg agreed to pay him 2000 marks a year against royalties. After the success of *Malte Laurids Brigge* (which he completed at Kippenberg's home) his salary was increased to 6000 marks a year.

Forty years after Hesse and Rilke had secured themselves a regular income, Brecht wrote to Suhrkamp suggesting that he be paid a salary. 'That would be tremendously important as you well know.' It was important for the firm as well: *Mother Courage* went on to sell 1.5 million copies in the German language edition. Brecht's good relationship with his publisher was all the more remarkable given his malevolent habit of rewriting his texts at the page proof stage.

Hermann Hesse

By receiving regular salaries three of the greatest German writers were encouraged to devote themselves exclusively to their creative profession. The practice has not caught on in England; Eliot was paid a salary as a publisher, not as an author. If, for those authors whose work deserves such confidence, the salary replaced the advance, then authors would be a step nearer to their desired 'professional' status, and would begin to play an equal, rather than a subordinate role in publishing. Unseld clearly feels that the goal of a literary publishing house should be to employ authors, allowing them the same rights and security as editors while guaranteeing them independence.

The employment of authors means, in effect, that all their work is published by the same firm. Unseld cites the case of Robert Walser, who had five publishers, as a cautionary tale. He calls Walser the greatest unknown author in the German language, and he attributes this lack of acclaim to Walser's poor relationship with his publishers. Although his work was praised by Hesse, Kafka, Musil and the important literary critics of the day, he lacked encouragement and investment from a publisher. He changed firms after the commercial failure of each new book, with the inevitable result that much of his work was constantly out of print. It was only after his death in 1956, in a sanatorium for the insane, that his work was rescued from undeserved neglect by the publication of a collected edition of his prose and poetry.

Unseld contends that a collected edition, complete with critical apparatus, indices and published correspondence, is vital for the reputation of a major author. And as authors have to die before their collected works can be published, so invariably their heirs enjoy much larger royalties than they themselves ever received. Unseld reports that as a result of the collected edition of Walser's work, interest in the 'great unknown' is steadily increasing and sales are beginning to take off. If only Walser had had the luck to meet a publisher with a 'beautiful mission', then he might not have written in anger: 'Writers, who are a pack of scoundrels in publishers' eyes, should deal with the latter as if they were mangy swine.'

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Olivia Manning

PAUL BINDING pays tribute to the distinguished novelist who died 23 July 1980

At a moment of public and personal crisis, Harriet Pringle, Olivia Manning's fictional *alter ego*, visits the Cairo zoo:

> She paused before one cage and another. The animals, comatose in the afternoon heat, seemed content enough. Then she came to a polar bear and stopped, appalled at finding an arctic animal in this climate. The bear was in a circular cage, not very big, an island of concrete surrounded by bars that rose up to a central dome from which water trickled constantly. The bear, sitting motionless under the stream, hung its head, torpid in its heavy white coat. Harriet felt it was in despair and leaning towards it, she whispered 'Bear', but it did not move. She was about to move on but unwilling to leave the creature unaided, she went closer to the cage and stood for a long time, trying to contact the animal's senses through the medium of her intense pity for it. It did not move. She knew she could not stand there for ever but before she went, she said aloud, 'If I could do anything for you, I would do it with my whole heart. But the world is against us . . .'

Harriet identifies instinctively with the mute and bewildered victims of cruelty inside the animal world. But all who suffer — the lost, the insulted, the injured — tear at her heart, a response made the more unbearable by her intellectual awareness of her own impotence. In the five novels of which she provides the central consciousness — the *Balkan Trilogy* and the two novels of the *Levant Trilogy* — Harriet is the radiating centre of compassion in a world rent by the violence, the treachery and the panic of protracted, ubiquitous war. Paradoxically this compassion tends to make Harriet harshly intransigent in her judgments. People's ability to practise both overt and covert cruelty and to turn blind eyes to both fills her with an intense anger she does not hesitate directly and unsparingly to express. She is a disquieting guide through terrible territory, in which a sore, despairing polar-bear epitomises countless other unwilled plights — young soldiers bleeding to death on burning desert sands, foolish old men shot at by confused fanatics — a world and a time described so hauntingly by Olivia Manning's older contemporary, Stephen Spender, with whom she has much in common:

> You must live through the time when
> everything hurts.
> When the space of the ripe, loaded afternoon
> Expands to a landscape of white heat frozen
> And trees are weighed down with hearts of stone
> And green stares back when you stare alone.

Olivia Manning's first novel, *The Wind Changes*, appeared in 1938. In 1939 she married R.D. Smith, then a British Council lecturer, later to become an eminent radio producer, and accompanied him to his post in Bucharest. The capitulation of Rumania to the Axis forced Olivia Manning and her husband to move to Greece, but when the Germans advanced upon Athens, they were evacuated to Egypt. The last part of the war they spent in Jerusalem. Olivia Manning thus experienced life in countries that were both theatres of war and yet victims rather than protagonists. She lived continually with a sense of ordinary people as bemused, helpless, unknowable, and in a state of nervous awareness of the dislocated morality and identity of her compatriots and fellow members of the intelligentsia, marooned in turbulence from all they knew best.

Her experiences during these years never left her. Indeed she spent the rest of her life analysing them, coming to terms with them, understanding what they illuminated both of the post-war world and the human condition. And not only in the two trilogies which take these years as their subject; earlier fictions deal with significant aspects of them too.

Olivia Manning was a highly conscious artist, her style is limpid, spare, exact. I would imagine that the visual arts were of great importance to her. Certainly it is as a painter's composition that each of her novels remains with one, every detail contributing to a unity of design and colour. Of the earlier novels perhaps the most remarkable is *Artist Among the Missing;* its quiet, relentless delineation of a state of agony entitles it to greater fame than it has enjoyed. Geoffrey Lynd escorts a party of refugees from Egypt to Palestine. He is lonely, his party's miseries weigh upon him. On a visit to Petra a dog, suggested to him as mad, licks his hand, and Geoffrey becomes convinced that he will contract hydrophobia. His obsession is, of course, the product of a mind broken by war, but the disease he fears is a perfect metaphor for the terrifying forces of cruelty our world harbours and nutures. Agnostic Geoffrey, creation of an agnostic writer, later exclaims:

> That's what's the matter with everyone. It's because we're pent up on this wretched planet in all its idiocy. There's no hope of getting away from it. Someone or other said God was a necessity, and it's true. Every race has discovered it. We can't just be trapped inside our bodies like this. When we realise we're trapped — just hopelessly trapped — we turn on ourselves and go crazy like an animal trying to bite its way through steel.

Beyond doubt, though, Olivia Manning's greatest achievements are the *Balkan* and *Levant* novels. In these she handles her daunting wealth of material with great artistic dexterity and an admirable sense of proportion that at the same time never reduces. Nor does her concern to understand public events impair her analytic comprehension of the private lives of her people. Harriet's marriage to Guy Pringle is as much the subject of these novels as the war itself; indeed its ups and downs reflect the confusions of the latter. Guy is a character brought to life both by the author's formidable command of psychology and by love — a man of ever-ready sympathies who has so much to offer almost everybody he meets that he would seem at times to have little to offer his wife for her own self.

So immense an undertaking as this novel-sequence inevitably incurs difficulties. Olivia Manning's hatred of selfishness leads her to pillory almost too many monsters of egotism, most notably the international sponger, Prince Yakimov, quite beyond redemption in his concern for himself. The savagery of these portraits is often too greatly at variance with the tenderness of many others — that of Harriet's lost protegé, Sasha, for instance. Moreover — though no doubt she would have denied it — Olivia Manning does seem to have conceived a dislike for the Rumanians, in contrast to her feelings for the Greeks, the Egyptians, the Jews and Arabs of Palestine. There are times, when, even engaged in recounting its harrowing political difficulties, she makes Rumania seem little but an evil, sticky web of chicanery.

In *The Danger Tree* and *The Battle Lost and Won* the scene moves to Egypt, before and at the time of Alamein. Harriet, as seeing eye, is supplemented by another, the ardent young officer, Simon Boulderstone, and thus we experience war actively as well as passively. Simon's search for his beloved brother, his discovery of him dead, shot when defenceless by Germans *(The Danger Tree)*, the unreal-seeming day that follows this discovery (*The Battle Lost and Won*) are masterly, shattering to the nerves. The account of the incestuous social life of Cairo with its desperate, frenetic, doomed love-affairs is no less penetrating. The two Levant novels are less prolix than those of the Balkan trilogy, and they seem to me the finer achievement. *The Battle Lost and Won* ends with Harriet separated from Guy about to escape from Egypt into Palestine, and with Simon gravely wounded. The third volume of the trilogy, *The Sum of Things*, will come out in September.

Olivia Manning wrote as courageously about death and the fear of death — in combat, in accident, through disease, through age — as any novelist in our language this century. And now she herself is dead. It is sad that she did not live to see the publication of her new novel or the likely television serialisation of the *Balkan Trilogy*. And it is sad for us who care about literature as a humane art that we have lost one of our most incisive, immediate and independent novelists.

Simon North

Separation

The image of death is an extravagance
I could do without, the finality
Undeterred, unwarming.
You can't dance with it — it
Has no candle-light illuminations
For the emotional shrine
Like old songs
And late night self-pity
When tears are half hopeful.

— But it is disturbingly real here
As I leave in a bulk of odd grins;
Its barrenness is close by
Desperately unbeautiful and distilled
Emphatic as your icy sadness.

And how else shall we discover means
To dismember the past?
We hug loneliness
Like winter trees
Unremembering but unforgetful —
Such blankness, yet such bitterness
And dread.

Beneath the consoling terror of distance
The thought stirs, and chills:
Because I loved you,
I need you dead.

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John Arden

Legitimate Target

Sheridan Le Fanu and Victorian Ireland by W.J. McCORMACK *Oxford* £12.50
The Anglo-Irish Novel (Vol. 1) by JOHN CRONIN *Appletree Press, Belfast* £6.95

I have received a letter of threat — not exactly anonymous, it has a signature: 'M. Foley'. Irish, one would guess, if the enigmatic heading didn't suggest otherwise — 'Shoreditch Bridge, British Volunteer Force': ever hear of them?

> Our organisation has taken note of your remarks which you have taken it upon yourself to make in the press recently . . . perhaps you think by getting out of England you have got away with the nigger arse-licking . . . (and now) you've gone in for Irish arse-licking and making snide comments about England. You are a legitimate target Arden.

It would be a matter for severe self-criticism if an honest Englishman, taken note of by such an 'organisation', were *not* regarded as a legitimate target. But supposing, with all my liberalism, my social enlightenment — Mr Foley, elsewhere in his letter, does call me a *pansy* — supposing the letter of threat had come from the IRA instead of the BVF? My fears for my physical safety (which I have been afflicted with on and off anyway for the past ten years) would then be accompanied not with a certain complacent self-righteousness but with acute moral and psychological disorientation. The question for this page of the NS is: how far would it affect my literary work? I think it would probably destroy it completely; I would be rendered incapable of putting three words consecutively on paper. But for Sheridan Le Fanu, born into the Irish Protestant community in 1814, the just rage of the oppressed populace seemed to have worked wonders.

As a schoolboy he lived in his father's Protestant Deanery in remote Tipperary: a magistrate described their circumstances.

> A set of ruffians are in their daily habit in their passage to and fro from a bog in the neighbourhood . . . of using the most horrid threats and imprecations against [Le Fanu senior] and his family, threatening them with the fate of the Revd Messrs Goring and Whitty who were murdered . . .

A deaf scholar visiting the house passed abusive groups of the same 'ruffians', and commented, smiling:

> I never knew I was so well known down here . . . I assure you, nearly the whole way as I drove from Limerick I was loudly cheered by the people.

Years later, Le Fanu's brother (who had to carry a pistol when travelling the parish on his father's tithe-business, and who was by no means deaf) wrote of the local Catholics:

> They appear to be devoted to us; if we had been away a month or two, (they) took the horses from the carriage and drew it to our house . . . bonfires blazed on all the neighbouring hills. In all their troubles and difficulties the people came to my father for assistance.

The Catholic priest, living less than a mile away, knew a good deal about these 'difficulties':

> [Their] bedding consists of straw or rushes, not sometimes changed for years . . . there may be about 100 instances of two families residing in one cabin.

Shortly after coming down from Dublin University, Le Fanu with some friends went for a walking tour in the mountains near his home. They saw a horse in the fog, and mentioned it to a few 'ruffians' (or devoted welcomers) whom they met on the road. The response was alarming.

> There is no horse on the mountain. What sort of horse was it that ye thought ye seen? . . . Oh begorrah, they seen the yalla horse. It is few that sees the yalla horse that has luck after.

This was just after a land-steward had been assassinated in the district.

> Now why didn't they give him a good batin' and not go to kill him entirely? . . . They kem from a distance and didn't like to go home without finishing the job.

These Zimbabwean contradictions disturbed him through the whole of his life. His first public composition was a nationalist ballad in favour of a rural hero of the 1798 Rebellion. But his first public speeches, at the Trinity College Historical Society, were in a 'favourably conservative strain' and strongly supportive of the Protestant Ascendancy. And yet by 1848 he had committed himself so far among the Protestant *Nationalists* of the Young Ireland Movement that he all but found himself caught up in the armed insurrection of that year (which was absurdly unsuccessful, though not without a tang of heroism).

Le Fanu extricated himself as rapidly as possible from such a perilous association and moved as far to the right for the rest of his life as he could. But he still wrote approvingly about rebels in some of his stories. He married a psychic hypochondriac religious-neurotic lady, who died young and left him guilt-ridden over the sincerity of his love for her; he held a nondescript sinecure in the Dublin courts ('. . . the office of Tipstaff has always been filled by gentlemen of high respectability . . .'); he cultivated the friendship of the exceedingly shifty renegade Green Tory politico Judge Keogh; and he had a son who went to the bad like a youth from one of his own novels, drinking, gambling, whoring and so forth. By the end of his life Le Fanu had become such a recluse that he was known as 'The Invisible Prince'.

His novels and tales are, at their best, masterpieces of the Victorian schizophrenic macabre. The most famous of them, *Uncle Silas* (analysed intensively by Dr McCormack), is unconvincingly set in England. Le Fanu knew little of England: whatever the superficial location of his fictions, they are really all about Ireland, an Ireland of letters of threat, beleaguered country houses, ghosts in the fog, politics-facing-both-ways, and terrible 'men-of-violence' suddenly metamorphosed from one's own close associates in all their apparent and civilised normality. There has not been much change . . . And I don't think we should take Le Fanu's career to imply that a writer requires to be something of a reactionary in order to convey the flavour of a country flailing its way to revolutionary deliverance. He was a very mixed-up man, like so many others of his day and ours — he *happened* also to be a man of talent. But, as Dr McCormack points out, it was a very uneven talent. Had he achieved a little more internal consistency, he might have created more work of lasting value. But this book makes very clear the interconnection between his writings, their general social background, and Le Fanu's own class-situation (on the skids). It can be thoroughly recommended.

Dr Cronin's book covers much the same ground, though naturally in less detail, with six 19th-century novelists from Ireland. As he does not include Le Fanu, the two books complement one another very conveniently. (His second volume, not yet published, will presumably handle 20th-century authors.) He takes one work from each writer — *Castle Rackrent* by Maria Edgeworth, *The Collegians* by Gerald Griffin, etc, ending with George Moore and Somerville-and-Ross. He affords a lengthy chapter to each book and a shorter one to its writer, and his approach is very similar to Dr McCormack's. That is to say, he is primarily interested in how novelist and novel fit in to the complexities of Irish society, religion, politics (particularly whether they express the views of the Ascendancy or of what Professor Corkery identified as 'the hidden people'; and also whether they assume a mainly British or Irish readership — a vital consideration when colonial literature is in question).

He has given us, all told, a most informative and stimulating handbook to his subject (it is quite short — only 152 pages). He quotes Maria Edgeworth:

> We hear from very good authority that the king was much pleased with *Castle Rackrent* — he rubbed his hands and said, 'What what — I know something now of my Irish subjects'.

Dare we suppose Humphrey Atkins is equally open to literature? Even so, George III didn't really put his new-found knowledge to very effective use. Will anyone in England — ever. . .?

Alan Hollinghurst

Rain

Though it is June and the garden full the
day
does not want to begin, the weeds thicken
without the chance of a purge and we close
the windows we always leave open a crack
to claim our right summer. The rain's
monotony turns the silly joke of its arrival
sour, and indoors reluctant as farmers, in
the way,
we go to bed for the day, trying as we do
to turn a misfortune into a romp.

A royal 'we'. Alone in the huge bed
I potter with the hurtful fictions, cradling
the curves of your head on the smooth
pillow,
agreeing how lucky we are to have started
again.
I reach on the table for a beaker of water,
flat and oily from the night before, and do
something I don't do, which I can only call
pray: for the orderly garden, unbeaten roses,
our stupid, sunlit innocence again.

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Oh, Coe, No!

DAVID CAUTE reports on the Ovett-Coe race

Many tormented readers of our books and arts pages have written to ask what really went wrong with Sebastian Coe. I notice that most of them write from freehold addresses in the suburbs, with one or two country houses thrown in. Few of them slept well the night before the 800 metres final and none of them slept a wink after it; all report symptoms of castration or, at the very least, of coitus interruptus.

I spent most of the night of 25 July perched on the window ledge of a 7th-floor student apartment in Moscow's Music and Arts Centre, watching trucks hosing the streets and imagining my idol, the White Panther, accelerating with that effortless, incomparable grace up the finishing straight, then tilting back his beautiful head, his slender arms raised in triumph. The Nureyev of the track. The following night I was once again perched on the window ledge, with a bottle of duty-free, contemplating the drop on to the roof of an Intourist bus parked below. For what I had witnessed at 7.32 p.m. from Stand A, section 6, Row 12, Seat 168 of the Lenin Stadium, was a nightmare that Sebastian and I had shared for two years — the two years, one must face it, during which Wilson of the *Wizard* had evaded a confrontation with the Grinning Horse.

You may recall how Wilson stepped out on to the Berlin Olympic track in 1936, in his long tights, to be greeted by the derisive jeers of phalanxes of arrogant Aryans; but imagine the disgusted jeers of phalanxes of British schoolboys had Wilson failed to win. Seb did not win: he was licked. If he licked himself, that's worse. Had he fought it out, stride for stride, with the Grinning Horse, then been pipped at the post, there would have been honour in defeat and fewer traumas in the freehold suburbs.

The most galling aspect of it for those of us who have mentally covered hundreds of miles of cruel winter training to build up the Floating Angel's body and mind to a peak on Saturday, 26 July 1980, was the fact that the Triumphant Horse never caught sight of the White Panther from start to finish! Unlike the Brazilian and the East Germans, Coe did not receive a single clip on the ear or elbow in the gut from Steve. Coe finished 3.5 seconds — some 30 yards — behind his own world-record time.

I mean, did Coe tap Ovett on the shoulder when it was all over and say, 'I was second, I really was closing on you, honestly I was'? And what did Ovett say to Coe as they stood behind the medal winners' rostrum while everything was repeated in three languages? Coe tilted his head in pained politeness to catch the message which can only have been: 'Don't look so glum, you little prick.'

Perhaps you don't appreciate Seb's tactical dilemma. As the fastest man (1 minute, 42.4 seconds) in the world over the distance, he could in theory lead from start to finish, 51 seconds for the first lap, 51.4 for the second, grinding his rivals to powder. Indeed the Sovietski Soyuz girl who smashed the 800 metres world record on the following day did precisely that. But in the men's event the competition is fiercer: if you break, others will hound you, jostle you, and Seb is very small for jostling. (By the way, Coe ran at least 10 yards further than Ovett in the course of the race, so he won, really.) Seb accordingly worked on his speed training, ran from behind — and blew it. It was Ovett who came.

In middle-distance running it's a matter of who takes whom from behind. Remember Bannister taking Landy in 1954 at the Empire Games? Chataway taking Kuts at the White City? Ovett taking Coe two years ago at the European Games (before himself being taken by an East German)? It is no coincidence that what is illegal in bed is celebrated on the track. I recall the expression on Ovett's face when Beyer steamed past him: this can't happen to me!

Indeed, if one wishes to learn a lot about oneself one need only ask whether one so badly wants to see the truculent, horse-toothed grin wiped off Ovett's face that one is prepared to witness his defeat not at the hands of some noble Swede or gallant Ethiopian (Brendan, it's time for a dignified retirement) but under the heel of some anabolically programmed East German — I don't mean Beyer — in front of massed ranks of Jugendtouristen from the DDR belting out their synchronised war cries and victory hymns.

Few British spectators in the Lenin Stadium seemed to share my grief about Coe. They were happy as day after day Alan Wells came out in his colourful cap and methodically adjusted his unwanted starting blocks, securely locked into his own concentration and taking no notice of our cries of 'Come on, Alan!' until that final cathartic moment when he stole a march on the repressive officials and blew us victory kisses. Mind you, there was an awful moment when the gigantic scoreboards flashed a picture of Silvio Leonard at the finish of the 100 metres, but then we immediately got the slow-motion re-run and Alan showed us the art of dipping at the 'tape'.

I can also report that Daley (or Day-lee, as we cried) made that irreverent gesture on the victory rostrum to encourage our attempts to sing 'God Save the Queen' and drown out (quite unsuccessfully) the Red Army Band's rendering of the Olympic anthem. We are not a nation of singers, unless Welsh. The Russian spectators around us were quite pleased by our little victories and joys, the spirit of the second world war lived again — what is more we had defied the Thatcher and weren't East Germans.

Day-lee, defying the determination of the robot-like officials to deny winners a lap of honour, got three-quarters round the track to bless us before being hustled into the wrong tunnel by a man in a yellow blazer who was terrified that Thompson would interrupt Lovely Sara Simeoni's high-jump ceremony. Next day Daley came and sat with the British spectators for a while and — so a young woman told me — recounted how he had been drug-tested until 1.30 a.m. One wished he hadn't dulled the shine of his decathlon triumph by puffing round the 1,500 metres, the final event, at a laboured crawl which would have disgraced any schoolboy on two legs. 'Try walking,' someone shouted. 'It's faster.'

Although we who were masters of the decathlon points system realised that his lead was unassailable, it was rather sickening to watch Daley's main Russian rival pounding in 18 seconds in front of him, giving the crowd the impression of yet another victory for Sovietski Soyuz. You see that I am completely immune to the crasser forms of nationalistic passion.

Lovely weather: scenes of pouring rain on British TV were faked. Not having to listen to Coleman and Pickering was a pleasure, as were the bizarre formulations of the English-speaking announcer: 'All the sportsmen are now highjumping'; 'The semi-final will take place at 5 a.m.'; 'The results of the winner are composed on the scoreboard'. All may not have been well with the French rendering either, for I distinctly heard it reported that someone 'a vaincu la médaille d'or'. But this is getting a bit like a *New Statesman* sports report and clearly it's time that I faced up to the central drama of the 22nd Olympiad, that of Ovett and Coe.

Greatly to his credit, the Horse has maintained an appalling relationship with both our athletics authorities and the sports journalists (to whom he apparently never accords an interview). Steve is his own man and he has a fine sense of humour: only recall that his decision whether to go to Moscow was deferred until the eleventh hour while he examined his conscience regarding Soviet behaviour in Afghanistan. Ovett is cheeky. The Crystal Palace crowd, the hard core of Southern athletico-maniacs, love Steve not merely because he wins and beats the foreigners, but also because he is a loner who offers two fingers to authority. Indeed their enthusiasm for Steve's hands and arms equals their esteem for his legs.

Unlike Bannister, Chataway and Brasher, Steve is no Oxford public shoolboy; he belongs to the more demonstrative tradition of Pirie and Ibbotson, the hard men without social pretensions who make no secret of their ambitions. Coe studied at Loughborough but can't help being a decent fellow as well as a beautiful athlete — hence the present distress in the freehold suburbs and country houses. It is Steve who emerges as the people's hero — if he gouges out the eyes of darkies who threaten to box him in down the back straight, serves them right. Let them lodge a complaint if they dare.

The White Panther, meanwhile, has ducked too many challenges and I, for one, look forward to 1 August when Steve Ovett will win the 1,500 metres final in a world-record time of 3 minutes 29.5 seconds, leaving Seb a finally broken man in 5th place, trailing behind two Sovietski Soyuz and a Ugandan no-hoper. It really is time to adjust one's dreams to realities so that one can go to bed happy, re-united with the British people. Come on, Coe!

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Light Against Dark

STUART HOOD reports on the Summer Show of the London Film-makers' Coop

October 1966 saw the founding the London Film-makers' Coop and the proclamation in a cable to Jonas Mekas, the New York film-maker and critic, of its intention to 'shoot shoot shoot'. In the early days of the institution there was inevitably a strong American connection, partly because of the importance of film-makers like Warhol, Sitney and Michael Snow, partly because among the founders were American expatriates like Dwoskin and Gidal. But there has always been a strong indigenous tradition represented by people like Malcolm Legrice or William Raban together with teachers and students from art schools and colleges. After a number of translocations and a series of financial crises allayed but not averted by subventions from the BFI and the LCC, the Coop has settled in an old warehouse perched above the main line to Euston. There, with its three cutting-rooms and its well-equipped cinema, it pursues the policy of showing a wide range of avant-garde film, of expanded cinema combining film and performance, of video installations, tape-slide shows and still photography. Guided by a tenacious belief in equality of opportunity, the members of the Coop are prepared to show the work of any film-maker who desires to use their facilities; in fact, however, its reputation as a stronghold of the avant-garde means that those who do present their work tend to come from certain specific trends and are self-selecting.

The recent Coop Summer Show, subsidised by the Arts Council, was faithful to the traditional policy in that it was described as 'an open screening designed to show recent work' and was intended to be 'an informal event facilitating dialogue amongst film-makers and the audience', which over the four days of the event was large, mostly youthful (as were the film-makers) and generally responsive to the work shown. (As we shall see it was prepared to make its feelings known about an item in the programme of which it disapproved.) In accordance with the egalitarian rules of the organisation no film or other work submitted was rejected. It is a cheering comment on the state of the British avant-garde that, although the process of 'gate-keeping' was thus avoided, the resulting programme was both interesting and varied. From the nature of the work which has in the past been produced within the Coop itself one might have expected that there would have been a predominance of what has been described as 'structural asceticism'. This was a minimal mode of film-making conditioned, in part at least, by sheer lack of funds. Something approaching this tendency was represented by Guy Sherwin's *Night Train*, shot by a camera fitted to the side of a train so as to take time exposures over a period of an hour between Birmingham and London. The result was a combination of strict temporal patterns and aleatory images — disturbing streaks of light against the background of the dark. But most of the work, while still falling into categories to which the avant-garde has accustomed us, was less severe although it inevitably included examples of the genre of 'room films' — rigorous explorations of apparently empty living-spaces in which the formalism of the shooting is a cloak for an oblique self-portrait of the film-maker. There were witty exercises with a handful of images and some predictably solipsistic views of the world defined by the frame of the viewfinder. There were evocations of dream, reality and memory, as in Susan Cheetham's *Untitled* or Claire Bardwell's *Phoenix Farm,* which recalled the work Maya Deren contributed to the American underground movement in the Forties and Fifties. John Woodman's *Reflections on my Shadow* was a pleasantly structured sequence of shots of the film-maker's shadow on grass, foliage, stone and sea-swept sand. In *That's Entertainment* for which the material was provided by a conjuror's performance in a children's ward, Jeanette Iljon worked and reworked her images, manipulating time and space to produce memorable effects.

Alongside such works, however, there were others which had a different feel — Peter Knight's *Secret Monkeys,* a montage of images from television, Brenda Martin's *How They Lived,* an assembly of advertising images of women, and Chris Garrat's *Commercial Break,* in which the techniques of the avant-garde were mobilised against the media and consumerism. It is true that these films engaged with only the epiphenomena of capitalism and its agencies and did not explore the nature of the system which produces such images; but the tendency was marked enough and sufficiently clearly expressed by film-makers in discussion to make it possible to feel that there is a shift in the attitude of people whose work, a few years ago, would have avoided social references. Another example was *Journey for a Car* by Bob Budd, a meditation on an overgrown dump for old cars during which the camera explored the skeletons in the undergrowth to the ironical accompaniment of a text taken from a manual of motor engineering. It has to be added that the one direct political statement — Adam Kossof's *In Sickness and in Wealth,* which dealt with Thatcher's onslaught on the Health Service — however admirable its aims and sentiments — was still caught in the toils of conventional documentary. In this respect the one narrative film of the show, *The Secret Life of Fish* by Steve Gough from the National Film School, was more adventurous. A spare account of the boredom of an unemployed youth it was shot with a coolness that recalled Chris Pettit's *Radio On* by its use of long camera-takes which fulfilled the director's stated intention of disrupting the empathy which is at the heart of the dominant mode of film-making. If those who run the Fourth Channel mean what they say about encouraging new talent on television, they will in future have their scouts at the shows organised by the Coop.

There remains the film to which the audience objected. It was the boring record of a drag act which was also blatantly sexist in its portrayal of a woman. The film having providentially broken, a vote was taken to decide whether it should continue to be projected; there was majority against continuing. It is typical of the Coop and its open method of approaching problems that during a discussion session next day the question was posed whether this had not been a case of censorship — should the projection not have been continued, for instance, and the film then discussed and perhaps condemned even if this disrupted the programme? The ensuing debate covered some interesting but familiar ground about audience participation and freedom of expression; it high-lighted the old liberal dilemma that if one is dedicated to the principle that everything should be shown one is likely to end up showing material which is reactionary and objectionable. Not surprisingly no solution was found to the problem. Nor was there a ready solution to a difficulty traceable to the Coop's determined egalitarianism which causes it to eschew the promotion of its members' films because promotion could mean favouring one film rather than another. The result is that the Coop's distribution effort is confined to little more than the preparation of a catalogue of films on offer. This, as one member pointed out, leads paradoxically to a free-for-all in which individuals have to fight for showings of their work. So where is cooperation? Utopians have a hard time but it is good to find some alive and active in NW1.

Theatre

Christopher Edwards

Mutants on Show

The Elephant Man by BERNARD POMERANCE
Lyttelton
A Dying Business by MUSTAPHA MATURA
Riverside Studios

The travelling menageries of the 19th century offered the public spectacles of exotic zoological specimens — bears, lions which jumped through hoops, and elephants. The popular taste was for the grotesque and could just as soon be satisfied by shows of unusual human beings, although 'exotic' is not the word to describe displays of men who danced without legs, of giants and of hermaphrodites. When John Merrick's manager advertised him as 'The Elephant Man', he must have thought he had cornered two markets at once but Merrick's deformity was just too hideous; he provoked a riot at Liverpool Street station and was moved on by the police at Whitechapel as offensive to public decency. The particular detail of his disease which gave him his catch-name was a pink stump of bone which projected from his upper jaw like a small trunk.

Anyone going to the Lyttelton to see a freak show will be disappointed. As the playwright points out in the programme, there is no attempt to reproduce Merrick's appearance. Instead, by a remarkable display of facial and bodily contortions, David Schofield *suggests* the deformities and in a visually dramatic scene shows us their genesis. Treves, the doctor who was eventually to give Merrick a

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home, has taken him to the London Hospital and we are given a lecture and slide-show based upon original pictures of the Elephant Man. Schofield stands next to the screen, naked, with his arms and legs outstretched in imitation of Leonardo's drawing of the Vitruvian canon of human proportions. As Treves describes the disease and shows us its shocking details, Schofield distorts himself appropriately as if obeying a command. The advantage of doing without papier maché excrescences is that, through the disfigurement, we don't lose sight of Schofield's fine physique and therefore of the ideal man behind the deformities.

In fact, as he gets worse physically, his humanity becomes more and more conspicuous until he seems to attain a state of grace, which Pomerance symbolises by making him construct a model of a cathedral with his one good hand. By contrast, as Treves's reputation as a doctor increases, his confidence in what he represents, once buoyantly expressed in a Sunday school catechism of values, shrinks until he looks upon himself as some sort of moral mutant, as grotesque in a way as Merrick. The collapse of Treves's moral identity carries with it the collapse of belief in a compassionate and charitable science, or as Ross, Merrick's old manager, puts it, the Elephant Man is still just a prize exhibit only the clientèle has changed. Those members of high society who come to see him — dukes, ladies, Princess Alexandra — are all using him as a conspicuous public charity, contributions to which allow them to parade their good intentions.

Perhaps there is not much new to say about Victorian hypocrisy but the issues here are made fresh because Merrick is like a credulous child forcing us to consider them as if for the first time, through his intelligent questions. His innocence and vulnerability are balanced by Schofield's use of the expressive possibilities of his disfigurement to suggest more ambiguous attitudes. For instance by a slight angling of the head his distorted eyes fix Treves in a sceptical gaze which seems to ask 'Who are you trying to fool?' He also exploits the eccentric modulations of his voice to express attitudes of blank astonishment or gentle mockery even when the words he uses indicate sweet compliance.

Despite Schofield's virtuosity this isn't exactly a one-man show. Peter McEnery succeeds in making Treves into an independent and poignant character rather than just the embodiment of a flawed argument, and Jennie Stoller puts humanity into the self-conscious worldliness of Mrs Kendall, the actress who befriends Merrick and provides him with a peep show of his own (all he gets to satisfy his 'romantic' leanings). The trouble with the play is that it is theatrical without being particularly dramatic. The set is brilliantly suggestive, consisting of an anaesthetised tiled chamber with doors set at zany angles and a large frame in the middle of the stage where Merrick eventually makes his 'home'. It could be a private room or it could easily be a display case. But the dialogue, abrupt and clinical in manner, threatens the characters with anonymity by making what they say sound like medical bulletins. True, the frigid public phrases they use make a point but at times the characters seem just voices in costumes and the action of the play reinforces this sense of detachment. There are 21 short scenes and even the fine live performance of a Bach cello suite between them can't give an illusion of dramatic continuity to this artfully staged moral fable.

Mustapha Matura's new comedy comes apart in the middle. Set in Trinidad it deals with the attempt by Roy to put into practice some of the entrepreneurial skills he has learnt in London to trick rich acquaintances of his dead father into contributing to a sham memorial fund. In the centre of the stage stands the coffin and Roy is directing the mourning of his mother to ensure that she makes her dramatic entrance just as he is clinching the deals. The trick works in that the suckers, instead of having second thoughts, start competing with one another as if they were at an auction. The fund is set up but the cheques all bounce and Roy leaves the country in disgust. What he doesn't know is that his late father's accountancy principles were slightly prejudiced and he has left a legacy to his wife and mistress of money stolen from the firm he devoted his life to.

The opening scene is a beautifully controlled piece of comic writing as Roy talks to his mother who is offstage preparing her entrance. It immediately sets up both characters as well as making neat ironic contrasts between life in London and Trinidad. No less impressive is the arrival of the first guest, Florrie (Lucita Lijertwood), mistress of the deceased and the island's best known professional mourner. Then, with the arrival of the two male guests, the comic invention suddenly fails, the humour becomes wooden and repetitious and, in particular, the second half of the work seems to become just an assembly of fragmented parts and what should have been the climactic revelation comes over as an afterthought included in order to put the lid on things.

Answering Service

GERALD RABKIN discusses two recent experimental productions in New York

The image is simple but startling: When the lights dim to black in the Old Prop Shop (one of many performing spaces in Joseph Papp's Public Theatre), the heavy curtains at the rear of the stage part, exposing before huge arched windows a figure silhouetted against the stunning row of colonnades across Lafayette Street. As the figure is gradually illuminated, we see that he cradles in front of him a three-foot puppet. With his arms slipped through the puppet's leather jacket, the man positions himself, with the visible invisibility of a Japanese Bunraku master, between two standing pay phones scaled to the puppet's dimensions. The phones are centred on a high, stage-long platform that appears to be a giant kerbstone, giving the audience a gutter-eye view of the proceedings. The arms move, the puppet, John, surges to life, aggressively initiating the first in a series of hilarious, frenetic phone calls that are the main text of *A Prelude to Death in Venice,* written by Lee Breuer but shaped by the experimental theatre collective to which he belongs, Mabou Mines.

Through the past decade and now into the Eighties Mabou Mines (the unusual name comes from Nova Scotia mining community where the group worked the summer of its founding in 1970) has built a bridge between the old experimental theatre of the Sixties and the new. Although contemptuous of the values of a greedy and oppressive society, its politics are never polemically expressed; they are filtered through an aesthetic shaped by the non-narrative conventions of performance art which rose to prominence in New York in the 1970s.

In its original works (called 'animations') and in its striking adaptations of Samuel Beckett's fiction and drama, Mabou Mines has striven to sustain a delicate balance between language and non-verbal imagery, between high and low art forms: literature, music, dance, painting, sculpture, film, the comic strip, pop songs. But unlike experimental theatre that uses performers as merely one of several physical elements composing a visual environment, Mabou Mines does not reject the actor's traditional reliance on motivation and emotion.

A Prelude to Death in Venice, which officially opened at the Public Theatre in May, had undergone several workshop revisions, having begun as part of a longer work, *The Shaggy Dog Animation,* a four-and-a-half hour collage of fragmentation and oppression.

As animated by Bill Raymond with virtuoso brilliance, the puppet John becomes a diminutive surrogate for mankind 'on the edge'. Trapped between threatening telephone kiosks, between units of electronic coercion, John desperately attempts to connect through the phones with the forces that control his destiny. First on one phone, then on the other, often simultaneously, he talks to various girl friends, to his mother, to an answering service which has coy messages from his (dead?) father, to a self-help organisation called John's Anonymous, to an international operator — to anyone who can impede his unravelling. The phones become his hope, his succour, his escape, even his art.

The wild, comic phone conversations — delivered in assorted accents and tones of cajolery, seduction, contempt, despair — are fragmented by electronic interferences, peremptory answering machines, disconnections, and by visitations from the police (represented by flashing red lights and by the huge wheel of a police car that rolls ominously onstage). But the major disconnection is at John's centre: 'What can I do? I go into myself. I become self involved. I try to be self effacing. But that's self defeating. I indulge in self recrimination. I long to be self transcending. But this becomes self deluding.' In a final, powerful image, he is released by Raymond to become an inanimate bundle of wood and cloth on a smoke-swirled stage; no transcendence, only literal disconnection and dehumanisation.

Despite its title, the work does not pay central homage to Thomas Mann's classic novella, though there are several mysterious allusions. John's answering service has a message from 'Tom, man', whose phon

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number is 1875-1955. As the service quotes the opening passages of *Death in Venice* in a comic German accent, John experiences a brief epiphany and passionately plays Bach's Prelude and Fugue in G on the touch-tone keys of the telephones. Fragmented images of Aschenbach's idealised love, Tadzio, appear reflected on the windows in the rear facade. But then the work, characteristically, playfully suggests references to Venice, California and to the grossest artefacts of show biz culture. Connections spring to mind: the prostitution of art, art as both the gateway to death and to its transcendence. Never mind. Mabou Mines has created a stunning theatre piece which, in Breuer's words, asks 'permission to subjectivise' in order to cajole a timid, conventional theatre to 'wait for poetry'.

Another significant example of the new experiment was on view recently at the American Place Theatre on West 46th Street where the Performance Group's *Rumstick Road* played a controversial six-week engagement. The centrepiece in an extraordinary experimental triology, *Three Places in Rhode Island,* by Spalding Gray and Elizabeth LeCompte, *Rumstick Road* was created in 1977 at the group's downtown home, the Performing Garage. Its move uptown this spring challenged the American Place Theatre's largely middle-aged, middle-class subscription audience, many of whom found the work baffling and/or infuriating. The gap between uptown and downtown theatre sensibilities remains formidable.

The audience's difficulty did not arise from inaccessible subject matter. *Rumstick Road* is a memory piece which recounts with painful clarity the suicide of Spalding Gray's mother in 1967. It is a 'documentary' in that it uses actual letters and tape recordings that Gray made of his family and the psychiatrist who treated his mother. But its confessional core is distanced and abstracted because Gray and LeCompte reject sentimental manipulation of such charged material. Influenced, like Mabou Mines, by the energy of performance art, they have created a dream-like mosaic of images that reaches beyond documented reality. As in other works in the trilogy (which became a tetralogy with the 'epilogue', *Point Judith,* unveiled last winter), intensely personal material is transformed into a structure more musical than traditionally dramatic. Theatrical environment, painterly images, the choreography of actions, gestures and objects, are as vital to each work as text.

The Performance Group was founded in 1967 by the critic and director Richard Schechner in response to the decade's political imperatives and waves of theatrical experiment — the Living and Open Theatres, the arrival on American shores of Grotowski. Schechner's work (*Dionysus in '69, Commune,* etc.) suffused its politics with self-awareness. He generated intense physical and psychological exercises and relied heavily on self-revelatory improvisation. But as the Performance Group moved into the less political Seventies, Schechner lost much of his creative vitality ('I can't get my politics and my aesthetics together,' he confessed), and the energy of the group passed to two of its members. Spalding Gray and Elizabeth LeCompte were strongly influenced by the new Theatre of Images of Meredith Monk, Robert Wilson, and Richard Foreman. Gray and LeCompte retained Schechner's faith in collective collaboration, but they moved away from his politics and psychological confessionalism. They wanted a more evocative, ambiguous theatre, and with the aid of a small core of Performance Group sympathisers set out to create it.

Beginning with *Sakonnet Point* in 1975 they created over the next several years an experimental trilogy of interlocked but independent pieces the heart of which is Gray's personal history. But the unity of each piece and of the whole is provided not by Gray's narrative, but by LeCompte's visual imagination. *Rumstick Road* best reveals their experimental method. The spectator looks into three contiguous vertical sections that form one wide set, like a triptych altar piece. At the centre a narrow control booth divides the action and allows us to watch the technical director manipulating the sound and lights, orchestrating the tapes and music that are essential to the piece's progress.

The radical juxtaposition of narrative and imagery continues throughout the piece. By constantly intermingling documents with evocative imagery shaped by LeCompte from the group's improvisatory confrontations with Gray's history, *Rumstick Road* transmutes private pain into something larger than personal tragedy. It also affirms the regenerative power of art.

Films

John Coleman

Guy and Doll

Little Miss Marker (U) *Plaza*
Can't Stop the Music (A) *ABCs Shaftesbury Avenue, Bayswater, Fulham and Edgware Roads; Classic, Haymarket; Studio, Oxford Circus*
Salvatore Giuliano (X) *ICA*
Robert Siodmak Season *NFT, 2-31 August*

It may be the circles in which I move, but I know an awful lot of kids whose idea of a bad time is a 'U' movie. So let me mildly reassure one and all (and that includes parents) about Walter Bernstein's directorial debut *Little Miss Marker,* drawn by that useful scriptwriter from Damon Runyon's sad, tiny tale of 1932. A 1934 screen version of this gave the eerie Shirley Temple her first big role, and there have been a couple of subsequent shots; but Bernstein's — like the others, avoiding Runyon's tearstained close — is unique in having found the perfect subject correlative for the mean-looking bookie, Sorrowful Jones, who finds himself lumbered with a wee orphaned girl. Walter Matthau, with beautifully snarly lugubriousness, carries this show throughout on his slumped shoulders. The kid he reluctantly learns to cherish is well found in an uncute 6-year-old, Sara Stimson, of whom more may or may not be heard; here she appealingly does the little asked of her, stoically munching on dry cornflakes until Matthau makes his grudging gesture towards the milk of human kindness, trotting round and round after him in revolving doors, falling asleep to a dry reading of the racing news instead of the hoped-for *Black Beauty.* Elsewhere, there is some rather hohum plotting, which engages Tony Curtis as a mobster leaning on Sorrowful and Julie Andrews as a widow beaming on him. The widow has a race-horse who has to struggle to come in last, and some nice gags cluster round this gimmick.

Generally, though, the high, loping Runyon rhetoric is groomed in favour of the sort of acerbities Matthau could, and often appears to, deliver in his sleep. The inherent awkwardness of the gangsterish milieu is undercut, as when Curtis has a henchman shoot Sorrowful's dog. 'See what you can get for the fur,' mutters Matthau to *his* sidekick (that great, nervous comic Bob Newhart, with nothing to do). The piece opens on gentling titles: period toy cars running before Thirties street photos, promising a level of fantasy that is hardly maintained. What's agreeable stems from the full justice Matthau awards to every line and situation. Buying the kid a too-long dress at a thrift shop, he justifies it to the trailing inch: 'It's formal!' Transferring her to the comfort of his big bed, he handles her precisely like a small parcel. His moral concerns grow. 'I don't want you to play cards for money,' he reproves. His brow furrows. 'You could lose.' Yet the daemon has been purged from Runyon at a cost. No one expected *Guys and Dolls,* but a few more guys and dolls — if only to compensate for the gentility of Miss Andrews — would have been welcome.

Can't Stop the Music arrives hotfoot after *Fame,* an even more commercially angled package aimed at proving all the world's a disco. Assembled by the formidable Allan Carr, co-producer and co-author of *Grease,* the fellow who made a mint out of re-working a Mexican unpleasantness about that cannibalistic Andes air disaster and issuing it as *Survive!,* the genial host whose 'black-tie dinner dance given in honour of author Truman Capote at the Los Angeles County Lincoln Heights Jail is still being talked about several years later' (production notes), this utterly relentless plug for a mock-macho male group known as the Village People has the delectable Valerie Perrine as a resting clothes-horse Sam, 'the Garbo of models', using her contacts — including one that gets crunched down with

Gavin Ewart

After an all-out nuclear attack on Britain

When it's all over
a few horrible people like Mrs Thatcher
will come out of their deep shelter
to look around,
quote St Francis of Assisi —
then go back underground.

JM 12
John Moores Liverpool Exhibition XII
Notice to Artists
Sending in days, September 15-20 1980
£13,500 in prize money
Leaflets available from: The Secretary, Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool L3 8EL

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the lasagne at a Sheridan Square backyard party — to promote the noisy oeuvres of buddy Steven Guttenberg, a kind of failed Travolta-clone first spotted skating down 42nd Street in split-screen. Those who have successfully negotiated that breathless sentence may enjoy *Can't Stop the Music.* There are frenetic dance routines, jigsaw-cut; five or six laughs; and one super spot from three black ladies, The Ritchie Family, which furnishes a little relief from the prevailing jockstrappery, subtly at its peak in an interminable production number called 'YMCA'. People keep saying, 'My time is *now*', and 'This is the Eighties', and 'This is MAGIC!': the result is surely the first film exclusively devoted to the process of selling itself.

The ICA laudably reminds us the cinema can both entertain and inform with a season of Francesco Rosi's works, pivoting around his extraordinary *Salvatore Giuliano* (1961). A corpse sprawls in the glaring Sicilian sun, that of a locally beloved bandit. Privileged spectators, we watch from above as police, *paparazzi* go about their various businesses. Rosi's shifting, fragmented occasion starts from this death in 1950 to move around in time and space, brilliantly offering all that can be known about the wholesale corruption, involving separatists, Mafia, small-time crooks, carabinieri, politicians, which surrounded this bit of waste-disposal. No answer emerges, only a sense of getting closer to the right questions. Technically, one is as astounded as ever at the skill with which we are made to work, almost *physically,* as in a long courtroom scene where we are once or twice rammed down near the back, encouraged to crane our necks for the significant speaker. See this above all and — for my money — *Hands Over the City, The Mattei Affair* and *Illustrious Corpses.*

Robert Siodmak (1900-73) is best known, and probably rightly, for his Hollywood *films noirs* of the Forties, *Phantom Lady, The Strange Affair of Uncle Harry* (black*ish*, this one), and the horror-thriller *The Spiral Staircase*, to name a select few. But that indefatigable enthusiast John Gillett is set on persuading NFT members that the whole body of his work, ranging from his beginnings in Germany and France down to his end in these countries is of more than idle interest. Certainly he worked with an amazing roll-call of international stars. Incidentally, one is struck by his fondness — or maybe fate just dealt the cards that way — for an actress (as it were) doubling up: Maria Montez, of course, as good and bad twins in *Cobra Woman*; Olivia de Havilland, doing higher-class ditto in *The Dark Mirror*; and Gina Lollobrigida as a legionary's lost ideal and found whore in a 1953 re-make of Feyder's *Le Grand Jeu.* Thirty-odd films to choose from, an offer unlikely to be repeated.

The death of Peter Sellers leaves me unfathomably moved and disturbed, as if it were a personal loss. Perhaps there will be a chance to explore why this should be so at some later date. His was a strange, special and somehow heartrending talent; but that's not it.

Among this week's contributors:

MICHAEL SISSONS is the President of the Association of Authors' Agents.

TIM JEAL is on the Books Committee of the Writers' Guild.

STUART HOOD lectures in communications at Goldsmiths College, London.

GAVIN EWART's *The Collected Ewart 1933-1980* was published recently by Hutchinson.

JULIAN BARNES is on holiday. He will be back on 15 August.

CHRISTOPHER EDWARDS has reviewed theatre for the *Cambridge Review* for two years. He is standing in for Benedict Nightingale for four weeks.

Weekend Competition

No 2628 **Set by Tim Hopkins**

'His ribs broke while he was being given heart massage.' You're asked to supply one-sentence 'explanations' of this ilk which might be proffered by the members of any profession about undesirable occurrences in their field. Max ten goes each. By 15 August.

No 2625 **Set by Frank Shortstraw**

Profound-sounding but pointless proverbs.

Report **By Ms de Meaner**

What an industrious summer you're having! We thought it might be down to the weather, but that's changed and still the sacks come thundering down the chute into the sorters' basement. The sorters have been working non-stop for weeks and are beginning to look the teeniest bit peaky. And this week the shredder's been at it round the clock as well — disposing of all entries reminiscent of earlier comps (anything to do with tomorrow becoming yesterday, all echoes of Roger Woddis's classic 'He digs deepest who deepest digs' and the like), all recurrent themes (especially stuff about further from birth being nearer to death) and large numbers of arguably significant proverbs (e.g. 'He who laughs last didn't get the joke' — *various;* 'It takes two to start a one-parent family' — *Stanley J.*). Meaning was a real problem; it kept sidling in. Still, a fair few of you managed to sound convincingly gnomic while remaining outstandingly pointless. A merry-go-round a saw for the following printed lore.

The best things in life are very enjoyable.

The wolf is deadlier than the guinea-pig.

WENDY COPE

The hunter and his prey know the night from day.

Soft cheese makes a poor garland.

NAOMI MARKS

If on Tuesday it doth rain
On Wednesday twill be fine or rain again.

N. MATTAUSCH

A high IQ is no guarantee of small feet.

False teeth may cause difficulties, but piles are more embarrassing.

TONY JOSEPH

He who pulls the lavatory chain during an earthquake does not blame the plumber if the house falls down.

JIM YORKE

A wise man does not need a chain saw to serve a blancmange.

A. BOTEMAN

A bride in bed means a man wed.

GERDA MAYER

The gas-man cometh not to the all-electric house.

The Centre is the Left of the Right.

STANLEY J. SHARPLESS

It's an empty seat that's never sat on.

P.W.R. FOOT

Absence keeps the doctor away.

Truth is seldom likened to a howling pancake.

He whose piranha fish fall into the river should not dive in after them.

JONATHAN R. PARTINGTON

One man's catch is another man's wicket.

That which is found was lost.

ROGER MARGISON

He who steals my car steals what is in the glove compartment.

W.S. BROWNLIE

The fuller the stomach the tighter the trouser.

JOYCE JOHNSON

He who wears a clothes-peg on his nose cannot smell the roses.

Not every hole has a rabbit in it.

DORIS PULSFORD

You can't make a sporran from a tea-bag.

Blessed are those who have God's blessing.

Many words make fat books.

There's no goat's milk in a coconut.

GERRY HAMILL

The man on the Clapham omnibus will never get to Highgate.

BOB SCOTT

The gourd may go to the well many times, but the water will still be wet (*from the Swahili*)

P.M.G. SHIEL

Beggars can't be existentialists.

KEVIN MORRIS

In the country of the elephants the blind man wears the wellingtons.

NICK LANGLEY

Damp is the ditch where streams are wont to flow
And dry is the land that knows not rain or snow.

MARY HOLTBY

It takes a bent brush to paint its own handle.

You can't get to London by climbing up the signpost.

JOHN LLOYD WILLIAMS

Happy is the man whose pig has no avatar.

Small may be beautiful but big has the grandeur of size.

SUSAN H. LLEWELLYN

It's a short leg that does not reach the knee.

PETER VEALE

The hand that wears the boxing-glove cannot lift the vol-au-vent to the lips.

BILL GREENWELL

Man without hernia needs no truss.

PASCOE POLGLAZE

All men are islands, but not all islands are men.

Wearing clean underwear does not mean that you will be knocked over.

TIM O'DOWDA

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Tony Miles

Chess

No 191 **World Open**

Recently I took part in the "World Open" — really just a pretentious weeklong Swiss — in Philadelphia. With an entry of around 500,the vast disparity of strength and rapid time limits are bound to produce a fair share of incidents. Indeed, as early as the first round the top-rated Rumanian GM Gheorghiu lost to an unknown American. However, nine rounds is usually long enough for class to tell and he won his next six to draw level with Dzindzihashvili, Alburt, Bass, Kogan, Kudrin, Benjamin, Seirawan and myself in the lead.

Incidentally, with all the outcry over the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan I really think it is high time Jimmy Carter began to pay attention to the Soviet invasion — or rather infiltration — of the USA. Of the above named the first five (!) are all Soviet emigres. On top of that Seirawan is of Libyan (via England) origin so the only genuine American was Benjamin. Another example: a few months ago an under 14 match over four boards was held between England and the USA and the first three boards of the American team were all of Soviet origin!

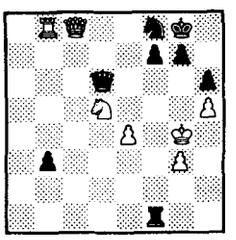
Anyway, back at the tournament Gheorghiu disposed of Benjamin and Kogan beat his better known compatriot Alburt. My strenuous efforts to beat Bass very nearly rebounded completely but eventually I salvaged a draw. The Dzindzihashvili — Seirawan encounter caused chaos. The game started at 11 am and from the opening Dzindzi was clearly better but encountered serious resistance. The game went on and on and on. The last round was scheduled to start at 6.30 but at 8.30 (!) they were still playing — numerous clear wins and draws having been missed. Finally, when it at last became clear that Dzindzihashvili was winning, the controller decided that the game should be adjourned so that the last round could start.

Predictably Gheorghiu and Dzindzi drew quickly and I strangled Kogan competently to join them. The North American contingent finally came to the top when Christiansen (USA) and Day (Canada) won their last round games to create a five-way win.

White: A. J. Miles **Black: B. Kogan**

1.P-Q4, N-KB3; 2.P-QB4, P-K3; 3.N-KB3, P-Q4; 4.N-B3, B-K2; 5.B-B4. Since my opponent was about 40 and originally Russian, I guessed he had been weaned on orthodox Queen's Gambit Declined — hence the text. **5 . . . 0-0; 6.P-K3, P-B4; 7.QPxP, BxP; 8.Q-B2, N-B3; 9.P-QR3, Q-K2; 10.R-Q1, R-Q1; 11.P-QN4, B-Q3; 12.B-N5, PxP; 13.BxP, P-QR4; 14.P-N5, N-K4; 15.NxN, BxN; 16.RxRch, QxR;17.N-K4! P-R3; 18.NxNch, BxN; 19.BxB, QxB; 20.0-0.** To the average player it might seem that Black has equalised but, in fact, White has a significant advantage. It lies in two things: firstly the restricted state of the black bishop and secondly the vulnerability of his QNP. **20 . . . B-Q2; 21.Q-K4! R-N1; 22.R-Q1, B-K1; 23.P-R3, Q-K2; 24.P-QR4, R-B1; 25.B-K2, P-QN3; 26.Q-Q4! Q-B2** forced, since . . . Q-B4; 27.QxQ is a trivial win. **27.B-B3, P-K4; 28.Q-Q5, K-B1; 29.Q-K4! K-N1; 30.B-N4,R-N1; 31.R-Q5! P-B3; 32.Q-Q3, Q-K2; 33.R-Q6, B-N3; 34.Q-Q5ch, B-B2; 35.B-K6, BxB; 36.RxB, Q-KB2; 37.Q-Q6** decisive if . . . R-N2; 38.Q-Q8ch. **37 . . . Q-B1; 38.R-K7, K-R2; 39.Q-B7, R-R1; 40.R-B7, Q-KN1; 41.RxP, Q-Q1; 42.QxQ, RxQ; 43.RxP, R-Q5ch; 44.K-R2, R-R8; 45.R-K6, RxP; 46.RxP, R-QN5; 47.P-N6, P-R5; 48.R-QR5** and (eventually) Black resigned.

Problem 191



White to play is a pawn down with his king exposed. If 1.RxP, Q-K4 is unpleasant, So, how should the game go? Answers to me at the NEW STATESMAN postmarked no later than 13 August.

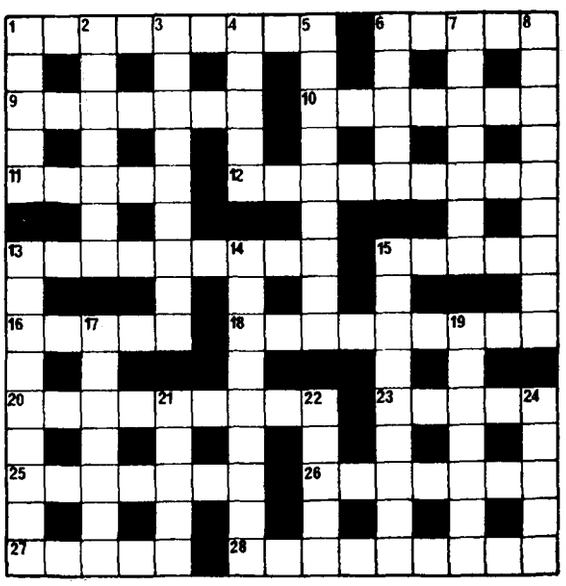
Solution to problem 189

1.R-Q8ch! QxR; 2.Q-K6ch, K-R2; 3.RxPch! PxR; 4.Q-B7mate.

Problem 190. Apologies! There should have been a white knight on K6.

Weekend Crossword 1351

PRIZES: Book tokens of £2 for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1351, New Statesman, Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ, by first post 12 August.



ACROSS

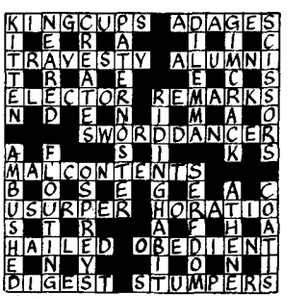
1 Leave out in payments for mountains (9)
6 'All — is metaphor, and all metaphor is poetry' (Chesterton) (5)
9 A friend is without certain backing for study (7)
10 Terminal atmosphere on the left (7)
11 Figure in account put back without initial (5)
12 Deceives admiral with optical signals (9)
13 Light showing movement of water on rock (9)
15 Game bird has this narrow crest in behind part (5)
16 Weapons as means of access to foreign countries (5)
18 Man in low temperature needs source of heat (9)
20 Criticise a weapon for saving society (9)
23 Seats which are not quite as firm (5)
25 Gay heroine has festive drink (7)
26 Turning round at a building (7)
27 Worker who suffers a change for the worse (5)
28 Immunity for next poem I translated (9)

DOWN

1 Had a drink up in the HQ (5)
2 Fat about court, but he was very fast (7)
3 They give treatment for employment among the lower classes (9)
4 Cultivation makes one hot on the slope (5)
5 Thus an age of vulgar entertainment provides such a broadcast series (4,5)
6 Something to drink with shows up marks on the face (5)
7 Edward at party with sailors, all decked up (7)
8 Town whose entrances are on top (9)
13 Imagines a drop in displays of jealousy (9)
14 Vibrate with the excitement of local ties (9)
15 Reject useful information where there is a lot of rubbish (6,3)
17 Everything in the performance is superficial (7)
19 Old title has to finish in ruin of fief (7)
21 Take part in a race on even terms (5)
22 Bump for a boat (5)
24 Where an old man is surrounded by evil (5)

SETSQUARE

Solution to No 1350



Prizewinners to No 1350

Dick Shannon (Dublin)
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ACADEMIC COUPLE wish to rent rural retreat 2 hrs London. 1-2 wkends p. mth. Box 9123.

AMERICAN PHYSICIAN and academic wife, require flat, with easy access to UCL from Oct. Box 8970.

FEMALE GRAD., sks own rm in quiet household. Pref. Greenwich area. Box 9035.

LECTURER, f., working London, living Cardiff, urgently requires London weekday accomm. from mid-Sept. Box 9102.

POSTGRADUATE and first degree students require rooms, flats, houses now and from September. Often for 9-12 months only. Ring London School of Economics 01-405 7686 ext. 468 (mornings only) ext. 607 (anytime).

RELIABLE TEACHER and social worker seek flat/share house, to rent from August. E. London/Epping/Harlow. 01-474 7057.

UNIVERSITY TEACHER and family (1 child) seek furnished flat with at least two bedrooms for research stay in London, from 1 January, 1981 through 30 June, 1981. Please write: Dr James E. Cronin, Dept. of History, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI 53201, USA. English references available.

VISITING ACADEMICS. Landlords, we urgently require flats & houses within easy reach of the British Museum & the University. Helen Watson & Co. 01-580 6275/9.

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Applications are invited for the post of **Head** of this List D School which will fall vacant on 1 January 1981. The main school has accommodation for up to 95 Catholic boys aged 13 and over. In addition there is a purpose-built secure wing for 18 boys and 6 girls.

Applicants should be qualified teachers or social workers and should have appropriate experience of the residential care and education of difficult children. Salary will be in the range £12,760 to £15,558 per annum, according to qualifications and experience. A 4-bedroom house, for which an occupancy charge is made, is available.

Application forms and further information may be obtained from Mr C. Forde, OBE, the present Headmaster; the application forms should be returned to the Official Correspondents,

Messrs J. McSparran and McCormick, Solicitors, 72 Waterloo Street, Glasgow to reach them by 10 September, 1980.

Applicants may visit the School by appointment with the present Headmaster (Tel. No. **041-772 5001**)

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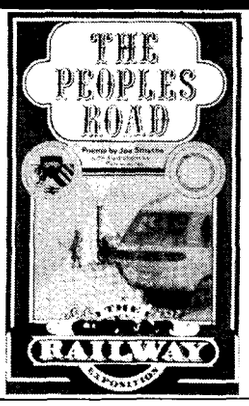

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Labour Movement Protest Against Exclusion and Thuggery

The statement below is signed by organisations and individuals in the workers movement with various political standpoints, who are opposed to the squashing of political debate on the left by the Socialist Workers Party at its 'Marxism into the '80s' school. The SWP excluded known supporters or members of the Spartacist League (SL) from the school on July 6, physically ejecting SL and Revolutionary Communist Tendency supporters who tried to protest against this exclusion inside the school. Later on that evening SWP members violently assaulted an SL protest picket outside the school, kicking and punching SL comrades and ripping up a placard.

The SWP must be compelled to cease using such methods by the pressure of labour movement opinion. We appeal for further support for this statement. More information, including statements describing the exclusion and the attacks, is available from: Spartacist League, PO Box 185, London WC1H 8JE, telephone (01) 278 2232.

Spartacist League (British section of the international Spartacist tendency)
24 July 1980

We the undersigned support the principles of workers democracy which demand that all tendencies of the left and labour movement be allowed to participate in meetings and events advertised as 'public'. On the basis of reports which have come to our attention that supporters of the Spartacist League were physically excluded and subsequently violently attacked at the 'Marxism into the '80s' debate between Monty Johnstone and John Molyneux at North London Polytechnic on 6 July 1980 by SWP members, and that other supporters of the Spartacist League and of the Revolutionary Communist Tendency protesting against these exclusions were also excluded, we register our outrage and condemnation.

Association of Kurdish Students Abroad (UK branch)
Association of Kurdish Students Abroad (International Relationship)
Sam Bornstein
Susan Bruley Convenor Feminist History Group*
Jack Collins NUM Area Secretary Kent*
Jeremy Corbyn Agent/Organiser, Hornsey Constituency Labour Party*
Mike Davis Socialist Charter*
Reg Groves
Martin Hart TGWU Shop Steward, BSC Stainless Works, Sheffield*
Ron Heisler Hackney Central Labour Party; Hackney Councillor*
Quintin Hoare Editorial Board, *New Left Review**, FI sympathiser
Ted Knight Leader of Lambeth Council, Lambeth Constituency Labour Party*
Ken Livingstone *GLC Labour Councillor, Hampstead*
S. Mani North East Croydon Constituency Labour Party, Executive Committee
J. McNeill President, Essex University Students Union; Communist Party*
Ian Olley TGWU Branch 1/37, Division No2 delegate*
Pat Olley TGWU Branch 1/1208, Newham Labour Councillor*
Janet Pickering Croydon NW Labour Party*
Jon Pickering Executive Committee, Croydon NW Constituency Labour Party*
R. Poole NUPE National Officer*
Reg Race MP, Wood Green, Labour Party*
Maurice Rea National Organiser, Tribune Group; Bristol City Councillor, FOC NATSOPA*
Frank Richards Revolutionary Communist Tendency
Al Richardson
F.A. Ridley
Jon Rothschild
Majida Salman
Spartacist League/Britain
Union of Turkish Progressives in Britain
Keith R. Veness GLC Labour Candidate (Croydon North East), Islington Central CLP*
Valerie Veness Islington Labour Councillor, Islington Central CLP*
P. Williamson NUPE, Labour Party*
Tim Woodward FOC, *Social Work Today*, NATSOPA*
Workers Power
(Partial listing of signatories up to 24 July 1980)

*Signed in a personal capacity. Organisation and/or position listed for identification purposes only.

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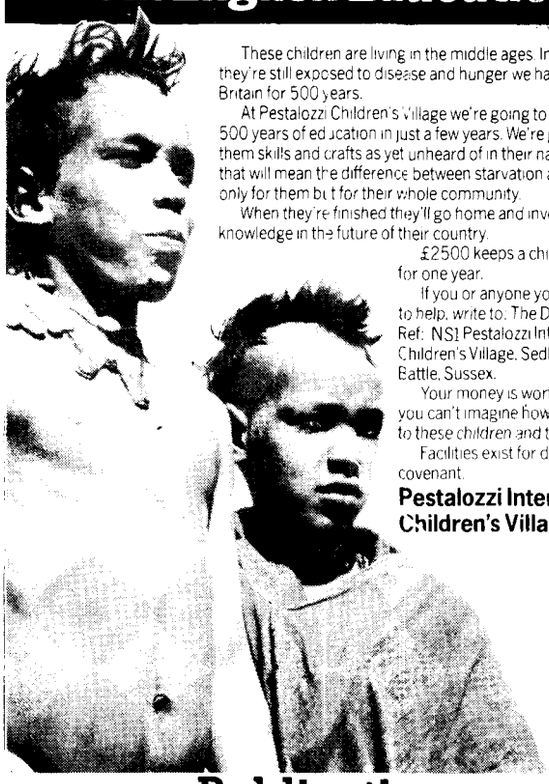

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